# WITH THREE ARMIES

ARTHUR STANLEY RIGGS

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His Majesty the King of the Belgians

Photographed in Belgium, 1917

# With Three Armies

## On and Behind the Western Front

*By*

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in Sicily, Etc.

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TO

E. C. R.

WHOSE FAITH AND VISION
ALONE MADE THIS BOOK POSSIBLE

# INTRODUCTION

Of books about the war there is no end. That is my excuse for perpetrating one. Had there been one book, or even a dozen books, I should have hesitated long to thrust my effort into so select and easily identified a company. But the numbers that have appeared have included some so unusually hasty and badly done, I dare cherish hope for a comfortable nonentity such as the present volume.

Moreover, the sanguine reader may be assured of certain soothing things. Here is nothing official. No luminary of any War Cabinet has endorsed anything I write, or prefaced it by any eulogistic foreword. The views presented and the things seen are the views and observations merely of an ordinarily intelligent layman, not in the least concerned with the purely military or strategic aspects of the deadly game.

To the average man, this war has brought a total revision of thought. For thinking in regiments and batteries, he has had to substitute thinking in armies of millions and whole parks of artillery. For battles covering a conceivable area and a few days at most, he has had to hear of battle-fronts hundreds of miles long, and of conflicts dragged into months without cessation. All this has conveyed to him one thing: monstrous size. Not having seen

it himself, he can not grasp it. Consequently, the war is emotionally nothing to him; it leaves him cold, chilled by its aggregate of horror.

I have tried to do something different from the technical, philosophical and personal accounts which make up the bulk of the war books; tried to give a view broader than that of either the individual fighter, the strategist or the philosopher; tried, in a word, to bring the war home to the reader who may possibly be either too remote or too indifferent to realize from anything he has read hitherto how big and how small, how heroic and how bestial, how exceedingly far from and how crushed up against his very soul, this war is. In so far as I may have succeeded in this perhaps too daring task, the work will have been well worth while.

In scant but hearty appreciation of the generous help given in securing much of my material, I am constrained to say only that I am under heavy obligations to the officials of the Maison de la Presse, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, of Paris, to the Secretaries of Embassy in Paris, the Staff and other officers of the French, British and Belgian Armies under whose supervision my visits were made to the different fighting fronts, and to many others. I regret that the present code of the Allied Governments does not warrant me in naming the individuals to whom this debt of gratitude and appreciation is due.

But they all, like the nameless soldiers and other persons who move with more or less reality through the succeeding pages, are playing the game in patient anonymity, satisfied to do their respective parts in laying, wide and deep, the foundations for what I believe from the bottom of my heart will be a peace that can and will prevent "any more war." *Finis coronat opus!* A. S. R.

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## CHAPTER I

### THROUGH INFESTED SEAS

The full blaze of an August Sunday—New York silent and deserted, save for the occasional trolley car half filled and rambling along without its usual air of desperate need for haste—the shimmer of heat waves rising from cobble and sidewalk—idle crossing police yawning at their posts—scattered pedestrians with their Sunday papers, and families with baskets getting a belated start for "the Island."

Even the great steamship piers looked bored. Outside stood a hundred motor cars. Around the entrance a man or two in uniform, some "Watch yer car?" boys, and a little knot of men and women were all that indicated the slightest activity. Within the huge, barn-like structures all was quiet: the elevators moved up and down silently, the few incoming passengers did little talking, and even the stevedores handling the last remaining barrels and crates, trunks and other baggage disappearing into the hatches of the great gray French liner which sizzled in the dirty green oiliness beside the pier were silent and careful. Going-away day in

war time is not like similar occasions in the care-free days of peace.

We all streamed slowly through the gate on the upper deck of the pier with a rustling display of passports and tickets, dock-passes and the like. Beyond, alongside the gangway giving upon the hot white deck of the vessel, ranged another fence, flanked by a row of tall desks at which United States Customs Inspectors wrote busily, pounded occasionally with rubber stamps, and asked grave questions. To pass that direct-eyed row of watchdogs, and their attendant satellites, lynx-eyed fellows who said nothing and saw everything, all one's papers and replies had to be in order. Again and again one replied or wrote statements as to birth, nativity, reasons for going abroad in war time, and so on; and the answers had to tally to the last dot over an *i* and the last crossing of a *t*.

Outside this proscribed area stood the wives and mothers, sweethearts and friends of the travelers. A certain tense grimness inhered; the laughter was a little forced, and an air of anxious expectation mantled every one not actually going. The sprinkling of khaki and French horizon blue burned like Very lights in the dinginess of the vast pier shed.

A hoarse whistle spluttered; we passed on board, craned our necks to see those who felt sure they should very likely never see us again, and sought vantage points on the upper deck from which to stare back at them. Nagged out into midstream by the waspish tugs, we turned our majestic

gray bulk slowly broadside to the pier. There they were —out at the end—a multi-colored blob: wives, sisters, friends, servants, longshoremen, framed by the slowly receding pier's stark walls of corrugated iron and scaly drab paint. Handkerchiefs waved; a green parasol jerked up and down frantically in farewell signals. Through the glasses we could see them, these brave girls we left behind us, knew they were trying to smile even when they knew we could not see them. We moved southward with reluctant slowness. The blob of colors became a mere fluttering, imagist speck of white against the ragged gulches and peaks of New York's architectural sierra. We caught our collective breath with a snort of the whistle, gathered speed, looked at one another inquiringly.

Why were we all so different, yet so much like the travelers of peace times, going cold-bloodedly into the gravest dangers that ever beset people at sea? The giant beside me who had come so much on the run he had forgotten to shave, this little, frail, middle-aged lady with thick eye-glasses and tremulous fingers, yonder rubicund pair in tweed caps and broad smiles—what reasons lay behind each purpose? What reason, rather. For, as we came in the ensuing days, of half guessed and little understood dangers, to know and value one another, the common purpose and nobility came forward modestly, but none the less surely. America! France! Civilization triumphant! There was the reason. Whatever the ostensible excuse for embarking, the true purpose beneath was the desire, passionately eager on the

part of some, dogged in others, unthinking or reasoned out —it all came to the one thing: each one would serve as best he or she might.

As we moved down the harbor alone, the gay Coney Island steamboats, crowded with holiday-makers, saluted us with fluttering white greetings; but the silent vessels at anchor, which had come through the barred zones, stared in wordless, signless comprehension of our errand. Across our path in the lower Bay stretched a line of cylindrical white floats—the submarine and torpedo net. We passed through its open "gate" and out to sea. Definite safety lay behind us, the adventure before. On the forecastle head, unheeding anything but their grim preparations, four naval gunners in the *chic* striped blue-and-white jerseys, red-tufted tam-o'-shanters and tight blue uniforms of the French Navy, gave us a sudden, theatrical appreciation of what we were going into, as nothing else possibly could.

Deliberately they stripped away the gray canvas covering of the French Seventy-five. They oiled it, they tested its various training devices, they swung it to and fro and up and down, to make certain of its instant readiness. And then for half an hour the men passed up and down in stolid silence, between gun and magazine, carrying the businesslike gray shells and stowing them in their proper racks near the piece, whose threatening muzzle protruded over one bow. They moved with such precision and ease, they handled the deadly shells with such easy familiarity,

that nervous little chills trickled up and down one's spine. Did not their ease and smoothness argue the same, or even greater discipline and swiftness on the part of the murderous pirates for whom they were preparing? Nobody talked much about it, but every one who saw looked a little soberer for some time afterward.

Outside Sandy Hook, rolling gently in the light ground swell, patrol after patrol, from the new, ugly motor craft to converted cruisers, ancient torpedo-boats and converted yachts, examined us with microscopic accuracy. Beyond, the lightship; later, the fading blue smudge of the Highlands; then the open sea. We began to unpack, to study one another, to squabble for places at the tables. For the moment, the tension was gone, and we chattered about lost baggage, the brilliant weather, where we should have our chairs placed, and who's who, exactly as a normal crowd of normal times would.

We were a motley throng indeed. A dignified French military commission, returning home after its work in Washington, made a bright spot of sky blue against the khaki of an American ambulance unit; a bevy of eighteen young women stenographers and clerks gathered hastily from heaven knows where and destined for the Red Cross offices in Paris; three journalists; a small group of ladies of independent means going to make surgical dressings in a hospital in Paris; a Bishop in black clericals; a hearty, cheery, wholesome crowd of splendid Y. M. C. A. workers; and a scattering of other individuals gave us perhaps more

character than ordinary. Unfortunately, some of this character was bad. A few individuals on that ship were guilty of repeated indiscretions so flagrant they astonished the French officers and made every other passenger wonder why it was necessary, even at such a time, to select volunteers apparently without thought or care. If America is to do her part in this war according to the best traditions of the country, it is a grave mistake to send any young man or woman overseas to represent us without first proving beyond peradventure the applicant's character and behavior.

In welcome contrast to these were the Y. M. C. A. men and the Red Cross inspectors. For the Y. M. C. A. no praise can ever be regarded as payment for the work its members have done and are doing. The old idea that the organization is a namby-pamby, goody-goody club, with a dash of conventional religion thrown in to leaven the lump has been thoroughly disproved by the war. In Russia, Serbia, Italy, Belgium, wherever the war has touched the raw of humanity, the Y. M. C. A. has gone with but one idea—service. Neither self nor sectarianism, neither danger nor cost, neither frightfulness nor death has been able to stop these men, whose creed is humanity, whose idea of service is the limit of their powers.

Came a week of calm, under bright skies and on smooth waters. Nothing happened, yet something happened every moment. Gradual efforts to settle down and study or work, crystallized in the Y. M. C. A. effort to learn college-yell

French, to the bewilderment of the French officers and the amusement of every one who already had a smattering of that exquisite tongue. Every morning at ten o'clock the Y. M. C. A. men, under the vigorous leadership of a former Professor of Theology in the University at Tokio, Japan, met in a circle on the promenade deck and studied French with all the zest of college boys learning to cheer their teams on to victory. The instruction was beautifully simple —so were the results!

Standing before the class, the cheer leader, book in hand, "lined out" a word or a phrase, repeating it until the class caught something at least of its pronunciation. Then they all yelled it in unison, to the time the leader kept with flail-like arms:

*Je prends l'omnibus!*
*Je prends l'omnibus!*
*Je prends, je prends,*
*Je prends, je prends,*
*Je prends l'OMNIBUS!*

was a typical example that made the decks quiver, its fortissimo declaration of "I take the omnibus" so conclusive no Frenchman could possibly doubt the intention of *Monsieur l'Americain* to take any omnibus he chose.

The days passed. Those nervous women who, the first night out, slept in their chairs on deck, so they could be ready to pop into the boats at the first alarm, became less —well, emotional. The heat of the first few days gave place to the usual Atlantic chill, and then came the life-

belt drill, superintended in person by the liner's Captain, a French naval Lieutenant.

Lined up on the promenade deck opposite our respective boats' numbers, we made a group any cinematographer would have given a month's pay to film for the "movies." Two journalists, both rotund as Bernini cherubs, raised a gust of laughter when they fastened on their belts in such a way that they could pose as the twins of a famous advertisement. Even the rather grim-looking Captain had to laugh at their grotesque appearance as he went down the voluble line, tightening a belt here, hitching one up there, warning this lady that she must do so and so with hers if she did not wish to capsize and float feet upward, smiling good naturedly at the patent life-saving suits of rubber, with their pockets for food and their whistles to call help.

Another day we had a war-fund entertainment with a *tombola,* or lottery, a charade in which the principal was one of the French officers—no mean actor, by the way—an American Ambulancier as prestidigitator, and an auction of all sorts of things, from American flags and handkerchiefs to bottles of champagne and boxes of cigarettes, which sold for figures that made war-time prices in the stores blush for shame. A pint of champagne at twenty dollars, and fifty cigarettes at ten were fair samples of the way the passengers chose to contribute to the fund.

Our first real sensation, a half-hour of excitement and wonder, turned afternoon tea cold and profitless with its sinister suggestion of some maneuver we could not under-

stand. The day was brilliant and the sea smooth when, just after the stewards had finished inquiring "One lump, sir—cream?" we sighted two west-bound vessels off the starboard bow. The one in the lead was an empty tanker, homeward bound for another cargo of the precious essence, the other a lofty-sided freighter of the usual type.

While we watched, the big freighter began an astonishing series of evolutions behind and around the tanker, which moved at an unusually slow pace, if she were moving at all. Meantime, we wobbled about over half the compass ourselves, with the reinforced gunners standing to their piece in readiness, and the bridge fully alert. One or two of the older ladies, and a girl who had one of the patented life-saving suits, made ready to pop into their preservers at an instant's warning. That ungainly suit of rubber, with its catfish-like mouth yawning beside its owner's chair in a Gargantuan grin, made the preparations seem somehow inexpressibly droll and unreal.

Around the deck pattered two barefoot sailors, saying never a word. But they let down Jacob's ladders beside each life-boat. More than anything else, that convinced the most hardy and skeptical of the nearness of something unpleasant. By this time our own ship and the freighter were near enough to signal intelligently, and in ten minutes things were at normal again, both ships on their courses, and the cold tea resumed amid excited chatter. That was what actually happened in every one's sight. What was afterward related, on the authority of every officer aboard,

from the Captain down, constituted a volume of fables that would have made a telling sequel to Munchhausen—or "Doc" Cook!

It was noticeable, however, that evening at dinner, that the Captain did not linger in his usual genial fashion; and next morning, when we had penetrated the outer edge of the danger zone Germany has so thoughtfully marked out as a happy hunting ground for submarines, every boat swung outboard clear of its davits, the falls cleared, the gear all inspected and stowed in every boat, the life-rafts ready, and the long cases on the boat-deck, containing life-belts for the crew, opened and their contents laid flat on the flaps of the engine-room hatch, where they were instantly accessible. Aft, a life-raft on each side of the ship was half launched, thrusting its ugly catamaran snout far out over the rail, so that no matter how far the ship might list in the opposite direction, half a dozen lively men could thrust the raft into the sea, which lay almost as flat as a mill-pond.

And that night danger passed close by us. Of course, the nearer we approached the French coast, the greater the danger, and the majority of the passengers slept, or rather lay and murmured uneasily, most of the night in their chairs, or paced monotonously up and down the throbbing decks. About eight o'clock the next morning, when I came up from my berth feeling very fit, I met one pallid specimen. He was a big man, with a round face. Now, in the

chill of morning, his nose was pink, and he assumed the woebegone expression of a pitifully tired child.

"Still goin' 'round and 'round and 'round," he said weakly. "Began at dark last night. Are we afloat yet?"

A long, low, dimly green line piped with white, resting upon a mysteriously intangible background of something neither sea nor sky nor land—France! And speeding straight out from it toward us, a knife-like slash of foam in the green and purple seas, below a taupe wisp of smoke, proclaimed the dirty gray little French torpedo craft sent to convoy us through the dangerous inshore waters bordering the mouth of the river up which we were to steam for hours before reaching our dock. The *torpilleur* swept down upon us majestically, circled once around to make certain of our innocence, drew off to one side and pulled ahead a little to lead the way. Scarcely had she taken position when in the farther skies appeared a pale yellow shapelessness. Half an hour, and the yellow blur was a huge French dirigible hanging directly above us, a tremendous triple sausage of khaki, beneath which hung a gray and red car, spitting a rackety stream of thin gasoline vapor out behind as her propeller drove her at four times our speed. She could not hear the roaring cheers that surged up from our decks as the Ambulance and Y. M. C. A. contingents realized what she meant and was. In a few minutes she was buzzing away again, lumbering through the hazy atmosphere like a huge bumble bee, hunting the waters for any sign of menace.

"Well," remarked one American who had kept his knowledge to himself until after the convoys by water and air had appeared, "this convoy business is all right, of course, but it's not necessary. The French just do it to make us feel safer. The fact is—I got this straight, and I know it's so—the Germans own so much stock in the French steamship lines that they don't try to torpedo any of their ships. Just throw a little scare into 'em now and then, but no harm meant."

How a near-sighted submarine could distinguish between a favored French ship and a vessel of some other country at night or in a storm apparently did not enter into the calculation.

Up the river we steamed, past little towns apparently untouched by war, moving slowly through the loveliness that only rural France can display, coming with the darkness to the great seaport where we were not yet expected, and few preparations had been made to receive us at the crowded wharves. Whenever we were within hailing distance of either bank, the more enthusiastic ambulance men, Y. M. C. A. boys and others roared out their good will and sympathy in sheer animal spirits and delight to the silent and amused peasants along the shore:

*"Veev-a law Franssss! Tou-jours! Tou-jours veev-a law Franssss!"*

On the outskirts of town, clustered along the river-bank, are the buildings of a great camp of German prisoners. As the boys saw the unexpected blond faces and field gray of

the Germans inside the wire stockade, their cheering died as abruptly as if it had been choked off. An instant later a deep growl ran along the rail from bow to stern. We passed the camp almost in silence. Not quite . . . One civilian went about from group to group on the promenade deck, always asking the same plaintive question:

"Haven't got an automatic in your clothes, have you? I may never get such a good chance again at those d—d Heinies!"

I had wished from the beginning of the war, if I could not serve in it myself, to know exactly what was happening "Over There," and also what happened on a trip across at such a time. Now I knew about the trip, and, given any credentials at all, it seemed very easy to reach the war zone. What happened in the thrilling, inspiring, soul-awakening months that I was able to spend on and behind the actual western fronts themselves, form the chapters that follow this one. By a strictly orderly procedure, I should leave the return voyage for the last chapter. But to keep my final pages clear for the far more vital considerations with which I hope to fill them, and to afford a convenient comparison between the voyage across, to France, and the return voyage, by way of England to the United States, it seems wisest to sketch that final trip here.

Easy though it was to reach the war zone, when the time came to go home, I found it anything but easy to leave. The beloved French police, who had been loath to receive

me, who had made me swear to having been born, and to being alive, to being married yet to being alone in France when I arrived, now seemed equally loath to let me go. The difficulties they interposed are perfectly reasonable in time of war but none the less trying to any one in a hurry. I had to obtain their permission to leave France; then the permission of the American Consul in Paris to leave France; last, but most vital of all, permission from the British military authorities in France, to leave France, and to enter England. The story of the tribulations of any one attempting to secure these different permissions in haste would fill a quarto, and perhaps give the German himself some new ideas for frightfulness.

That was only the beginning of my troubles, for at the French Channel port of embarkation, suspected by the British local authorities established there of being some sort of an undesirable, perhaps because I had confessed to having come over for what my passport designated as "literary work," I was given opportunity in the quiet loneliness of a thinking-chamber to speculate on "After Death—What?" When I had stewed miserably in my own juices for half an hour or so, a thin-faced and stern-looking man entered, looked me over, and began a questionnaire that lasted long and left me to wonder what I really had been doing! At last he laid down my papers and remarked dryly:

"This is very interesting, sir, but—of course, you can prove it all . . ."

"Prove it?" I echoed feebly. "No, I don't believe I can. Here are all the other papers I have. If they won't do, please communicate with our Embassy in Paris by telephone."

My questioner looked over the additional documents, handed all my papers back and signified that I was not to be shot this time. Moreover, he apologized for having "upset" me by the somewhat formidable ordeal. As I was going out of his door, having a hard time to move in decorous fashion, he called, in the most casual tone imaginable:

"Oh, by the bye—you don't recall going anywhere with a Mr. Blank, do you? Know anybody by that name?"

Fortunately I didn't, for I rose to his bait. It sounded so plausible: a gentleman inquiring after somebody he knew. . . . War is full of inquiries like that.

"Why, no, not that I remember. I don't recall anybody by that name, either. Why?"

"Oh, nothing, only—we'd like jolly well to meet Mr. Blank here," was the grim and meaningful answer, as the thin gray lips came together sharply.

Ten minutes later I was standing at the opened port of my cabin on the cross-Channel steamer, tearing up and throwing overboard what I assume was a perfectly innocent letter given me by a French Foreign Office official to post in America to his wife. At the moment the British official asked the routine question: "Have you any correspondence with you?" I had forgotten that letter. When I remem-

bered, it was red-hot and as big as a pet corn in a new shoe! Having once said I had nothing, if I went back and gave up that letter, no matter how innocent it might prove, I should be in for a thoroughly unpleasant second questionnaire and a search so thorough that it would uncover even my dreams. But I need not violate the law; I tore up the missive and dropped it into the sighing waters alongside.

Our little procession that night consisted of two hospital ships full of wounded going to Blighty, our own ship, and the usual convoy of destroyers. The weather was good for submarining, rainy, blowing half a gale, and black as a pocket. The enemy could creep up and wait in our path unobserved. But we had little anxiety, so thorough has been the scouring the British destroyers and trawlers have given the Channel lanes, and so constant is the watch kept upon them by sleepless eyes.

The same is true of the inshore waters off the English west coast, from which, half hidden in the drizzle of a chilling fall rain, on a nameless American liner, we put out into the river, lay at anchor a whole day speculating and finally slipped off at daylight when the coast was reported all clear. What a day that one of swinging at anchor was! Submarines outside—a new liner not yet on her maiden voyage but merely coming from the yards, torpedoed and destroyed—an American destroyer sunk—two big passenger liners sent to the bottom, one visible from our ship when we passed its location. Rumor was busy indeed. But we were on the home stretch, we had all of us seen much

and learned more; we were on an American ship with a veteran crew. Every man of that crew had been through at least one previous torpedoing, blow-up or wreck of some sort—reassuring, that! It was more reassuring to know our own destroyers were scurrying to and fro outside, combing the waters for our safety.

An American ship, and American guns—and such guns! Here was not one graceful and delicate, hard-hitting but diminutive French Seventy-five, but four powerful six-inchers, one on each bow and stern, so delicately balanced they swung to a touch, and manned by gunners who might be green at war but who nevertheless actually stood on the mountings with hands ready to training gear and breech-block, and eyes that never ceased for a moment to sweep the wild tumble of waters. Day and night those gun crews stood by, not in a vague notion of being on hand if anything turned up, but hunting for trouble as a cat hunts in a stubble-field for mice. England may gibe gently at the grim and businesslike air of our boys as indicating their rawness to the game of games, but the hope of every one who has seen them at work is that they may never lose one jot of alert and eager readiness.

The ship herself was not painted a uniform war gray, but with a bluish-gray as a background, she was literally covered, hull, superstructure, funnels, spars, boats, everything with bilious green and red-lead squares, set diamondwise —*camouflage* at sea. When coming aboard a young aeroplane engine expert, with the rank of a Lieutenant-

Commander of the Royal Naval Reserve, shivered at this hideous pleasantry, and all the way across missed meals and kept away from the bluest part of the smoking-room.

We were convoyed by a lumbering old merchantman converted into an armed cruiser, and by two swift American destroyers which tumbled about in the rough sea until they seemed so many frisking dolphins rather than armed vessels. They rolled until we could see their keels; their funnels seemed to lie flat along the smother. They dove half out of sight into solid masses of grayish green, to be thrown quivering back on their haunches next minute, out of the water as far aft as the bridge, trying to roll over and go down stern foremost at the same time, corkscrew fashion. Our good ship *Camouflage* tumbled about in lively fashion, too, and our lumbering cruiser companion showed her red bilges with pendulum-like regularity.

Aside from the rough weather at first, it was a very different voyage from the journey over—no excitement, no tension, except one morning when one of the gunners whispered to the Navy Lieutenant who was watching our game of shuffleboard.

"Huh? Right! Stand by! I'll get my glasses!" he replied, and vanished.

Every one who heard hurried forward to a vantage point behind the big six-incher, whose crew was already keeping it trained on a faint black smudge on the horizon. With every roll and heave of the steamer the muzzle of that gray monster followed the distant target unerringly, the men at

their stations, the doors of the shell-room open, everything in readiness for the command—that did not come. The smudge became one ship, two ships, a whole fleet—a convoy of troopships and supply and munitions vessels, led by a protected cruiser. A brief command barked from above released the eager men and left the gun to swing only with the drunken roll of the vessel, but the thought voiced by a gray-haired skipper of the R. N. R. was in every mind as we watched:

"Smart lads, those! I'll wager they had the range first!"

Nothing more of any interest happened except the Sunday morning service in the saloon, when a steward whose hearing was not quite the equal of his musical education played the hymns, and our good Bishop, he with whom I crossed on the French vessel, addressed us informally but with an impressiveness that found every one.

And then—home, safety, families, everything in the dusk of early dawn, with the chilly waiting at the protective net, at Quarantine, the slow progression up the harbor, and a British officer who had never been in America before, asking plaintively:

"I say, old chap, does your Statue of Liberty thing really show so we can see it from the ship?"

## CHAPTER II

### BEHIND THE FRONT

"Say, New Yo'k, did France usetuh look like this befoah the wah?" asked the soft voice of a Georgian Y. M. C. A. man as we leaned over the rail watching the exquisite panorama flow past. "Some country," went on the voice, musingly, without awaiting any reply, "if it's all as suah-'nough good as this end. Don't wondeh the Fritzes wanted to hog it for 'emselves—an' the French to hang on to it!"

It is all as good as the southern "end." Never had France appeared lovelier than on that August afternoon when the steamer wound her way slowly up the placid river, through fields untroubled and mellow in their summer maturity; beside sleepy little medieval villages plumed with the slowly rising blue smoke from a chimney; past stretches where the rustling mimosas and rushes made a rich green arras flung over the banks. So far as the unaided eye could see, here was no smitten land, bleeding internally, sorely pressed by a voracious and conscienceless enemy. Under the soft and hazy sky sturdy figures moved about the broad acres, horses drowsed in the shade or plodded patiently along chalky white roads, bordered by willows and poplars glistening opal and malachite in the thick sunshine. Children played happily about their doors,

and the riverside markets in the little towns threw us strong gleams of color—many-faceted gems that refracted the light with prismatic richness.

What the eye did not see at our distance was that the sturdy figures in the fields were those of broad-backed young women or stooping ancients; that the horses were ancient, too, and some of them scarred; that the children's happiness was a silent happiness, if, indeed, it could be given that old, joyous name at all; that the vegetable markets were brilliant with color because there was no crowding throng to hide the gay hues of the carrots and beets, the silver green of lettuce and cabbage. For young France, aye and middle-aged France, too, still lies out under the star-shells of that mysterious region, the Front, plowing with something that cuts deeper and more fiercely than a plowshare, and reaping with something that harvests more than sun-tanned wheat.

Notwithstanding her losses, France is neither defeated, depressed nor in the last ditch. Mourning she wears, but she wears it with the pride of high privilege, not the despair of utter loss, with the surquidant air of one who has been decorated. To one who had hardly dared think about a France garbed in black, her spirit was a revelation, and the mourning itself not nearly so depressing as imagined. Weary France is of the war, weary to the point of utter revulsion; but disgust does not mean disinclination to fight, and France will go on, if my knowledge of her, extending over many years, is at all reliable, until the Hun is

beaten decisively or there are no more Frenchmen left to fight him. The spirit and power that enabled France to retreat and retreat until the vantage ground of the Marne was reached, without losing morale; the spirit that fired the Army and urged it to victory in the terribly bloody field of the Somme; the spirit that made good Verdun's heroic cry of *On ne passe pas;* the spirit that is now, in 1918, keeping many a soldier in uniform notwithstanding a missing arm or leg or eye, is not the spirit that yields. Determination without hope often saves the day; but in this case the feeling of France, of all the Allies, is one of something more than hope: it is certainty.

They look to America. They are certain now that the forces of decency and right will win, because we have thrown our vast resources of man power and matériel into the scale in such a way that all Europe knows we really intend to do our part and see the fight through. Before we began to show actual results, the world was inclined to take the German view of our declaration of war—mere *camouflage,* to hide commercial intentions. To-day the peasant in the field will shake his grizzled head and pull deep on his cigarette with the wise air of one who always said it—"Ah, but yes; that America! It is well." And the women look up from their sewing or their babies to nod and smile: "That brave America; she is with us, *non?*"

That southern city where we landed has the lines of war graven deep on its gray old face, usually so smiling and benevolent. Here, as in all the other war ports, the

old, placid life has been uprooted with a jerk, and in its place is a stream of men, guns, supplies; a tide of strange-looking foreigners, horribly in earnest and with not an instant to waste upon conversation; a sense, on the part of the inhabitants, of vagueness, of being lost in a maelstrom of something they could not grasp even though they knew all about it, and consequently a yielding that seems to the thoughtful stranger a little inert.

The rail journey from the sea to Paris is a constant repetition of the vistas along the river: sweeping landscapes as warmly lovely and as sympathetically tinted as though the hectic colors of war were on the other side of the world, instead of next door. It was impossible to realize, before seeing the battle-fields and trenches, that these sunny acres and quiet towns and contented streams had been saved from the Hun cure-all of *Schrecklichkeit* by the closest of margins.

Paris! What untraveled American boy of all our vast expeditionary forces, be he officer or man, does not look forward to seeing the lovely siren of the Seine? And with what assurance does not the lucky chap who has been on duty there talk of his experience, self-consciously familiar with the famous restaurants and hotels, museums and galleries, boulevards and bridges? To hear such a one lecturing to a less fortunate companion, who listens respectfully and shoots avid questions back, is a treat. Often the queries would be almost unanswerable for a Parisian born, but the soldier who has been there is a veritable compendium of in-

formation, and has, moreover, an imagination typically American.

Paris is still Paris. Nothing, apparently, can ever wholly transform the eternal spirit of youth that keeps this marvelous capital perennially fresh. True, her lights are dimmed, her wounds many and grievous, her shops are closed! Only a few of the many, to be sure, as one scans the long streets, but enough to give us the notion of what a war like this in the United States would mean, with fronts boarded up and quaint notices pasted for the information of customers. On one Parisian milliner's shuttered windows is a neat sign: "Owner away. Studying German styles. Will reopen at the end of the war with a complete new line." Will he? is the thought that strikes every one after the gay, almost impudent humor of the notice has passed. Another store bears the inscription: "Office now with the —th Infantry at the Front. Customers will kindly be patient until the end of the war and our reopening."

That dingy sign, faded with its three years of exposure to the weather, carries the motto of all France: patience. Every one in France is patient, even in the jammed "Metro" on a wet night when the shops have closed and feminine Paris is set free. The New York Subway itself is no more crowded or busy. There is this difference: however jammed together the Parisian crowd may be, nobody's clothes are torn off, and nobody yells "*Watchyerstepwatchyerstep! Plentyoroomupfrontthere!*" or puts a knee in

some one's back to squeeze the helpless inside that menacing guillotine-like door with the mighty spring. Everybody is good-natured to the soldier, too, even when, muddied with the clay of the trenches and bulging in fifty places with equipment and the most unimaginable sorts of packages, often with a wine-bottle sticking its red neck out of a pocket at a bayonet angle, he inserts himself heavily into an already full car. A dainty skirt may be pulled aside a little, or a fragile hat tilted away from the heavily-burdened soldier, but there is no protest, even in the heart.

And the soldier to-day in Paris is legion. Not a house but has its *poilu.* Sooner or later they all come home to spend their *permission,* and we see them everywhere. Some of them come on their backs, alas, to be swallowed up in the vast, quiet hospitals, whence they generally emerge a little whiter, a little quieter than when they entered. Then the Champs Elysées and the Tuileries Gardens, the Grands Boulevards and the little squares and parks about the Invalides, see them sunning themselves or resting upon the benches. A sad spectacle? No! The *mutilés* are not sad themselves, and they would properly resent our being saddened by their appearance; but they accept attention graciously. The crossing police are very gentle and tender with them, and the flying street traffic stops to let them pass—the only living beings, perhaps, who ever halted the turbulent flow of the Paris streets! In the vast courtyard of Napoleon's ancient Hôpital des Invalides, where the myriad trophies wrested from the *boche* have been gathered,

unmarked convalescents and limping *mutilés* solemnly inspect the guns, the aeroplanes, the shells and other devices of modern warfare, sometimes explaining them with careful simplicity to admiring civilians.

Paris unchanged, did I say? Not altogether: she has become quieter in some ways, noisier in others. Her old brilliant colors have toned down—the women dress soberly, though without having lost their *chic*. By day the city's appearance conveys little out of the ordinary—except that the French, who in other days used to make us leap for our lives in crossing the streets, and arrested us for interfering with the traffic if we were run down, now themselves leap quite as frantically when they hear the imperious klaxon of an automobile driven by a soldier-chauffeur in the American khaki! The streets are tawny with khaki, kaleidoscopically tumbling with the tall, sturdy figures of the striding British and their Colonials, springy Americans, swaying Highlanders in tartan and sporran, huge, fawn-uniformed Russians, gray Italians with starred collars and soldierly carriage, stocky little Portuguese and lean, melancholy Serbs. Decorations and orders blaze on every breast. The French aviators, in their horizon blue fatigue uniforms or the black and scarlet of other days, are the most modest and reserved of all, with probing eyes that look through the streets and their denizens into those far, aerial, boundless spaces where Bergsonian time is the measure of life. Slender boys they are, generally, with sensitive faces and fingers, yet gifted as no others are with

the storied impassivity of the gambler, yielding to no shock and impervious to everything but the praise they shun. On their narrow chests, not yet the rounded shapes of full-grown men, burn the medals which tell of those frightful, whirling, upside-down and inside-out combats where death plays hide-and-seek with men through dank clouds of vapor: the dull green and bronze of the Croix de Guerre, the scarlet of the Legion d'Honneur, the green and gold of the Médaille Militaire. The people know these silent figures, and worship them. Artillery, infantry, tankmen, the "Mopping-up" daredevils, all these have their meed of gratitude and praise; but the flying man whose seat is between the wings of death itself, whose voice is the whip-lash staccato of the machine-gun—he is the idol.

For days after Captain Guynemer, the "Ace of Aces" (the French system of rating in the air service counts a man an Ace when he has been officially recognized as the proved destroyer of five enemy planes), had been shot down in Belgium, those of us who knew of his fate dared not breathe it. We watched with interest the anxiety of the crowds to know why he, whose Croix de Guerre ribbon had had to be lengthened again and again to accommodate the fifty palms and stars which bespoke his victories, was no longer mentioned. We saw that copy of *Excelsior,* with a short poem-requiem dedicated to an unnamed hero of the air; we felt the restlessness of spirit it evoked. Men stood on the street corners to read it, and shake their heads as they asked themselves anxiously: *"Est-ce not' Guyne-*

*mer?"* When the sorrowful news was published officially, all Paris, yes, all France, mourned for the gallant and inextinguishable spirit upon whose shattered machine the German aviator who had brought him down is said to have dropped a commemorative wreath.

The reserve and modesty which so endear the flyers to the people was characteristically shown by Guynemer. Replying to his father's demand for his first impressions on arriving at the front, he wrote his thought back in telegraphic style: "No impressions; curiosity satisfied."

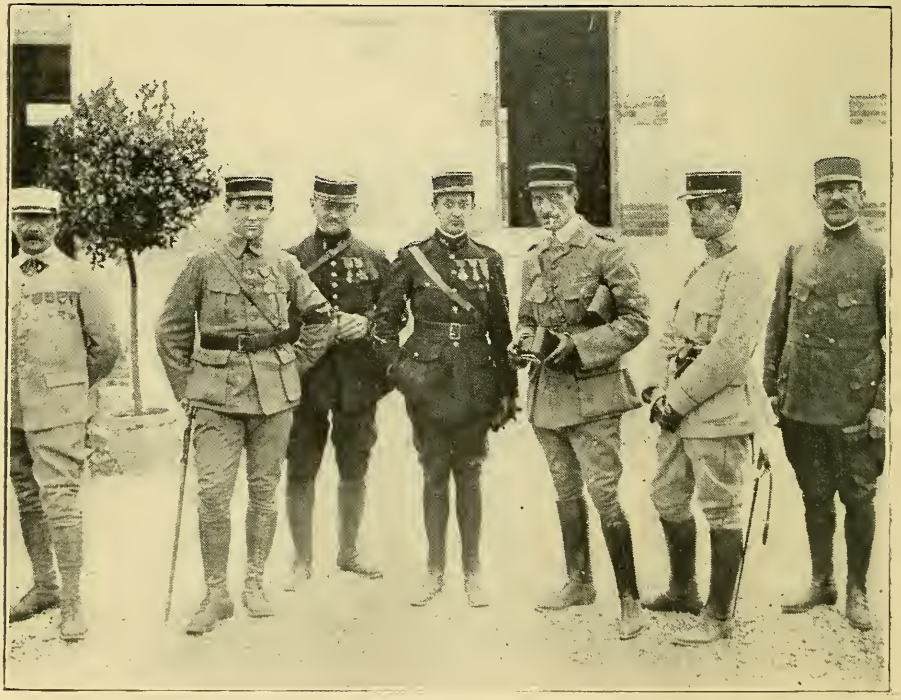
Shopping is still a matter of some difficulty and perplexity for the alien. Never having ourselves experienced the nightmare through which France has been compelled to pass, it is hard for Americans to understand certain rules regarding the purchase of ordinary necessities, and amusing—provided one is philosopher enough to have cultivated a decent sense of humor—to be entangled in the personal interpretations of the different shopkeepers.

On arriving in Paris without camera or typewriter, which the French officials in New York warned me might occasion me a deal of trouble, my first inquiries elicited the fact that I might have both. A kodak was speedily acquired, but films were another matter. The Government regulations restrict imports practically to supplies contributing directly to the life of both military and civil population. The Kodak Company, having a stock of films sufficient for about ten months only, and being unable to obtain any more in the immediate future, refused to sell any one more

British official photograph issued on behalf of The Press Bureau

Prisoners taken in the new push around Messines

An observation balloon



Group of aviators with the late Lieutenant Guynemer, the famous French Ace, in the center

than a certain limited quantity during any given week. As for a typewriter, there were plenty of the ponderous desk machines to be had; but the little portable machines—! After some hunting, the store where they were sold was located, and a machine reposing in the window proved that there was at least one unsold. I might as well have offered money for salvation!

"But no, Monsieur," cried the *chic* little woman in mourning who tended the shop in her husband's perpetual absence. "I have only this one. I can not sell it. I will take your order. . . . I should have some machines in —well, perhaps next spring."

"Sorry, Madame, but that won't do. Can't you rent it to me?"

She shook her head in surprise. "Rent? No, indeed! I must have it in the window so I can sell others—if the Government ever lets me import any more."

Premiums, arguments, cajoleries had no effect. That machine must remain in the window, earning nothing and slowly deteriorating, as an advertisement for typewriters she will not have for many long months to come.

In a haberdashery on one of the Grands Boulevards an English clerk sold me some Scotch lisle at an outrageous price, with the naive explanation: "Oh, I know it's 'igh, sir, but you see, sir, the French Gov'm't won't let us import *h*any more, so we 'ave to put the price up so 'igh we can keep it all for customers as wants *h*only the best!"

Subsequent experience seemed to indicate that he had

voiced the opinion and attitude of all shopkeepers. Many hotel-keepers follow the same pleasant scheme, and are pained when one demands the ordinary comforts of other days: oatmeal, for instance. My hotel had none and would buy none. None was to be had in Paris—there was no demand for it—in war one does not eat oatmeal! But the war bread lay soggily upon my pampered stomach, so I tramped a mile to a German delicatessen (it has changed proprietors and nationality, it is said, but not its name), paid fifty cents for five cents' worth, and gave it to my Greek floor-waiter. "Ah, yes, Monsieur got it, didn't he? I knew he could!" exclaimed the unblushing rascal. How that oatmeal vanished! I must have had the appetite of a whole battalion.

With a considerable part of the foreign population and a certain element of the French themselves, there is no lack of money, nor of the inclination to spend. The famous restaurants, such as the Café de Paris, Prunier's, Ambassadeurs, Grand Vatel and others; tearooms like Rumpelmayer's; expensive establishments of every sort, in fact, are lavishly patronized. Most of the money; I should say, goes for food and drink. It may be the only solace of a warring people: certainly the world does look brighter after a plenteous and soothing dinner, with immaculate settings and perfect, silent service. Nevertheless, to the thoughtful American, knowing the appeals made from France for help, knowing the millions that have been sent over from our full purses to help the stricken and the

homeless, the flaunting prosperity of such establishments, with women in diamonds and costly furs, and men in evening dress, all waiting in line for a chance at a table, is a discordant note worthy of America itself. I remarked upon it to a French friend, when we were dining one evening in one of those very places.

Characteristically he shrugged, and considered lovingly the sole before him in its rich golden sauce.

"*Eh, bien,* my friend. The rich! They spend. *Sapristi!* How should the world know they are rich if they do not spend? America sends nothing for them. They are not like us; they live in a different world from us human beings. We have hearts, they have stomachs!"

It is when Paris wraps her veil about her raven head for the journey through the twelve realms of the night that she is most impressive.

The gray dusk falls almost palpably upon the thronged Grands Boulevards and in the swirling human eddies about the "Metro" kiosks, which proclaim themselves in letters of vivid green. It trickles steadily down from somber eaves and awnings, to coagulate under the trees and about the newsstands like a heavy gas through which men and women walk only half discerned. Shops put up their curtains or pull down their iron shutters with a clang. Lights begin to glow feebly out, not yet illuminating, but merely intensifying the dark behind and about them. Overhead, the hooded street lights are turned on, cutting pyramids of feeble radiance through the solid black of the

night. The whole city hums with going-home and closing-up activities. It is not, however, the high, stridulous note of other days, but a concentrated buzz, a monotone that breathes the soul of the city and its untiring endeavor.

An hour later the quiet of a country town reigns, save for the blatant honk of the decrepit old taxis—little one- and two-cylinder affairs relegated ages ago to the scrap heap, and resurrected only when all the efficient motors were demanded for war service—as they pant and stutter their tin-panny way past corners unlighted and dangerous. And now one can hear a different buzz. Thousands of feet overhead, circling like eagles above their nest, mighty protecting aeroplanes wing purringly, and the pedestrians look up thoughtfully, to make certain of the red eye which glows reassuringly down upon the slumbrous city below; the sign visible of safety for the helpless millions spread along both sides of the silver Seine.

Out by the ancient city fortifications there are guards by day also: fat, pursy observation balloons floating at intervals along the northern front, watching ceaselessly for the terror that no longer flies either by night or by day* against the uncaptured city, while in the vast dry moats the peasant women tend their vegetable gardens, and soldiers *en permission* snore peacefully in the sunshine or ramble about the grassy glacis.

In towns where there is any possibility of danger, or

* This was written before the renewal of air raids, which commenced the night of January 30, 1918, after the lapse of six months.

where there are military depots or stations of importance, the darkness at night is appalling. The people feel their way stumblingly, bump into one another, trip on unexpected irregularities of the sidewalks; horse cabs and an occasional military automobile creep through the uncertain walkers in thoroughfares whose every window and door is curtained with black or shuttered tight. Only in the residential quarters is the blackness relieved by little processions of winking stars—the pocket torches the householders use only to discover their own doors. The silence is really worse than the dark. A footstep is audible a block, a cry four or five blocks, the rumble of a heavy vehicle throughout a whole quarter. Any sudden or unusual noise electrifies the town. It is the same story 'cross-Channel. The crawling mass that is the British capital writhes in and out upon itself, colliding, apologizing, slipping away in the dark without recognition. Restaurants and hotels are recognizable only by their bulk or architectural peculiarities.

This darkness is harvest time for the unfortunate women of the half-world. By the thousand they infest every great avenue of all the large cities, French and English, lurk in every byway, invade every hotel and restaurant, and attempt even to penetrate the sacredness of the Red Cross and semi-religious huts and canteens which minister to the fighting man. They are not the mere flotsam of unmorality to be found in time of peace. They are the wrecks, thousands of them, that Germany's degenerate policies of war have cast up on the Allies' shores. Some of them, no doubt,

made war their excuse for what they would not have dared in peace time. But to many tragedy piled upon tragedy until, their normally scant store of morals gone, they chose "the easiest way." "The easiest way!" To see their wolfish faces, which no artistry with rabbit's foot and rouge stick can disguise, and their hungry, pleading eyes, Belgian, Polish, Galician, French, Russian, Serbian, English, Irish, yes, and American even, is to look into the pit of that hell the Hun has loosed throughout the world, and whose victims are not yet numbered. They are hungry, these poor creatures. So are the lonely babies many of them leave at home when they start to prowl the lightless streets—babies some of them the offspring of rape, some of a too-yielding love, some of careless girlish passion or recklessness. And one mere child I saw, one night in Piccadilly Circus, far gone in pregnancy, with an expression upon her haggard, painted face a Dante only could have put in words to wring the soul.

Never, so long as I live, shall I be able to see the full moon again without thinking: "They'll be over to-night!" For over them all, Paris and London, seaport and inland city, hangs the sinister threat of the air raid whenever the night is bright. I have sat quietly through such a raid in a restaurant in the very railroad station the flying *boches* were trying to hit—the waitresses kept smiling; the cashier never looked up from her accounts—and heard the frightful explosions of those two-hundred-and-twenty-pound bombs

of high explosive, the raving of the anti-aircraft guns, and the snappy crack of bursting shrapnel. I have heard the piercing *alerte* of the great siren upon a town fortress warn the population of the approach of the enemy, and the bugle call that announced the danger over. I have looked down into the demolished tangle of timbers and masonry that a few hours before was a house where nineteen men, women and children had taken refuge, and seen the débris lifted cautiously away in the hope that though the groaning had died out into a sickening silence, there might be a little life yet left to save. And I have talked with those heroic English women whose ambulances responded to that call while the bombs were still falling; women who could tell me without thought of anything but service, of standing by the workers, or penetrating the ruin itself regardless of their own danger, to alleviate the agony whose cries dropped away one after the other as the hours passed until finally there was no sound save the scraping of the beams and stones being lifted from their bodies.

Frightfulness? No—*Failure!* Wherever Germany has loosed the insane fiendishness of which she boasts, the result has been the same. Murder has been done, hideous cruelties have been perpetrated, and whether the work be "in heaven above or in the earth beneath or in the water under the earth," its effects have been most terrible upon the exponents of frightfulness themselves, robbing them of whatever soul they had left, and, now that the Allies have

been forced to reprisals, bringing before them in letters of fire: With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again; pressed down, shaken together and running over.

## CHAPTER III

### THE ARMIES ON THE WESTERN FRONT

How is any one, psychologist or materialist, to describe the Allied Armies that are fighting Prussian militarism, and give the man who knows none of them a grasp of their fundamental differences of racial pride and feeling, and at the same time make perfectly obvious the cohesiveness of the common cause before which every difference is "sunk without trace," every personality and racial aspiration subordinated?

We think and speak cheerfully of the "Allies" in the war. But why "Allies"? Why are the Nations allied—what does it all mean? How many of us have ever thought of it seriously, or done anything but smile when a helpless miniature republic like Costa Rica or Monaco, or an effete oriental monarchy like Siam, casts in its lot with its greater neighbors?

There is a meaning: be sure of that. Otherwise why should a score of Nations all around the earth band together—white and black, yellow and brown, great and small, weak and powerful, rich and poor—to fight the Teutonic Powers? Ah, one man says wisely, the reasons are too clear to require any great thought. Here one nation entered the war for sheer self-preservation. Here one is in

it for the most selfish and sordid of reasons—acquisition of territory; this one for indemnity; another for revenge; still another to curry favor with the stronger Powers. On only one point is every one agreed: that we, the United States, are in the war for absolutely unselfish and altruistic purposes. As Americans, we could enter the war in no other spirit—yet, even we were under suspicion at first.

To some extent the wiseacres' strictures may be founded on truth. Human nature is human nature, and very few motives are purely disinterested—even American motives! But I also affirm that back of every other reason, underlying all the minor motives, there exists a solid, common foundation—the innate decency of the majority of mankind. This basic fact is so pure and untainted in its springs that it not only has held fast for three and a half years nations otherwise rivals, but is adding strength to their numbers as the fight goes on.

Never before has there been an epoch-making war more a crusade and less a sordid conflict; never a war, since the lays of the great migratory struggles, in which the issue was conquest and absorption or death; never a war in which the opinion of the enlightened world was so solidly united, so determined to carry the fight to the bitter end whatever the cost. All that is what has made Allies of practically every Nation which has subscribed to the belief in civilization instead of barbarism, which has no wish to revert to primitive principles and the caveman law of force alone.

Of all the Armies, the simplest to understand is the

Belgian. Fighting in the first instance purely for honor, then for the preservation of life itself—not only the life of the Nation, but individual life—driven to the last desperate stand on the tiny remaining strip of free Belgium, it has sustained in every way the heroic traditions of its predecessors throughout the ages.

For a good deal of this I believe King Albert I is responsible. The man who, as a Prince, tramped fifteen hundred miles through the jungles of the dark Congo to see for himself whether the alleged atrocities King Leopold had winked at were true, and who, as soon as he reached the throne did all he could to remedy the evils, has proved himself to be to the Belgians of the twentieth century what Joan of Arc was and is to the French. Exposing himself in the trenches, sparing no fatigue or danger, working as few monarchs ever have had to work, Albert of Belgium has been everywhere and done everything to hold his people together and make possible a continuance of the Belgian Nation and ideal. The national motto, *"L'union fait la force,"* never had a better exemplification than in the achievements of this quiet, unassuming monarch, who has united himself and his people and his Army in an indissoluble bond, despite every difficulty and hindrance. The faces of the men light up when his name is mentioned, and I have heard them attempt to disguise their depth of feeling for him with rough but tenderly meant epithets that would translate—could they be Englished at all—into profane appreciation of such a "bear of a King!"

Perhaps the King alone could not have made the Belgian Army what it is in the circumstances: the Teuton propaganda has been insidious and persistent; the racial differences and interests of Fleming and Walloon tend to make them think and see at cross purposes among themselves. But ever before their eyes has been the example of such heroic spirits as gallant Cardinal Mercier—as brave and determined a man as he is great a prelate—and that temperamental Mayor, fiery little Burgomaster Max. No doubt, too, the solidity of character of the Belgians, that made them so successful in developing their country, helped to hold them together while it was being shot from under their feet. To-day the officers, from Generals to Sub-Lieutenants, all display sunniness of soul and sweetness of temper. How much of this is for the sake of impressing the foreigner, and more especially to cheer their men, no one can say. The men, less intelligent and naturally less informed, evince a sturdy, unemotional, placid assurance. I could interpret them only in one way, analyze their attitude only as saying with perfect clearness: "We have fought a mighty good fight. We are not trying to do the impossible now, but we will hold fast to what we have. And we know the future is safe!"

Most complex of all is the British Army, that weird medley of Englishman and East Indian, Afrikander and Canadian, Highlander and Australian, Irishman, Welshman and New Zealander, and the Chinese laborers who form a military auxiliary of tremendous value. Weird as

the conglomeration is, its psychology, taken altogether, is very simple: "frightfully bored, but going to stick it!"

The best expression of this dogged attitude is perhaps the reply any officer will make when asked how long the war will last. "Oh"—a little wearied by such an idiotic question—"the first fourteen years will be the worst; after that, every other seven."

There never has been any question in Tommy's mind about the result. "*H*england beaten—by a 'un? Garn!"

Tommy is not, on the average, either a very quick-witted or a very thoughtful person. When an officer is in charge of him, he takes the view that the officer is responsible for him, body, boots and baggage; so he mislays, drops, loses, forgets his equipment with a fine disregard for the next possibly tragic moment. Only when he is "on his own" is he careful. But under all circumstances he is perfectly and calmly sure of one thing: he will "stick it" if it takes a hundred years to decide the question definitely.

Beaten, in retreat, badly used by his Government, not fully comprehending why he was fighting—all this in the frightful summer of 1914—he still stood to his guns without a thought of giving in. Now, better equipped, better fed, better supplied than any other Army in the field in 1918, he is bored, horribly bored. Only in action does his boredom cease. Otherwise, he is "fed up" with the whole wretched business, but placidly determined to go right on, no matter how long it takes, as was that lorry driver in 1914 detailed to take a motor truck from Reims

to Amiens. He and his mate rumbled on their way as far as Rouen. "Blimey!" exclaimed the driver. "This 'ere eyen't the plice. We've missed the barmy road." He made inquiries. A Frenchman indicated the proper route, but suggested that the two Tommies might find the *boches* at Amiens. "Orl right, ole top," responded Tommy, lighting a fresh "fag," "we'll mike the run orl the sime. If we sees any 'uns, we'll shoot 'em."

Tommy's indifference to danger carries on quite as calmly when he is in the hottest of it as when he is fifty miles away. Never was this more Britannically displayed than on the September day (1917) when Fritz caught a party of Royal Fusiliers along the Broenbeek in his barrage. The men sheltered in a trench more a rubbish heap than a defense, and the German guns "laid down" a deadly torrent of steel and high explosive all about them, yet they sang cheerily the Army version of *In These Hard Times*—

*"You've got to put up with anything*
*In these hard times!"*

They could not retreat, they could not advance. Living, dead, dying huddled together. The air was full of flying steel and acid fumes and débris and bits of men, while the solid earth shook to the explosions—and the song roared on with a joyous inconsequence:

*"Oh, if you live to be ninety-four,*
*And carry on to the end of the war,*
*You may get leave, but not before,*
*In these hard times!"*

The men in the support trenches heard and took it up; the enemy across the shell-blasted stretch of No Man's Land heard it, too, and must have marveled at those "crazy English." All the while the Fusiliers, working with their dead and wounded, sang gallantly on, and the tawdry music-hall ballad took on an epic quality that spoke the soul of England—that great and modest soul no German can ever comprehend.

The British soldier has never seemed to "know the use o' fear." But until 1914 and after, he was insular to the last degree. India did not change him. Egypt burned him with its sun, but did not alter his thought. Political parties in England alternated, and new cabinets muddled about as always; yet still he remained firmly and incurably British in every heart-beat—and insular. To-day the old British spirit is still full and strong, but the insularity is largely gone. The soul of England has been purified and sweetened by the black draft, its corners rubbed smooth by attrition with her strenuous Colonials—high-spirited Canadians full of the tang of the north woods, brawny Australians and New Zealanders with no room in their capable heads for pettiness of any sort, stout-hearted Afrikanders who have scant patience with red tape and inefficiency. One and all they were shocked by England—shocked her. When the first surprise wore away, they trod upon the maternal toes deliberately, brutally. They "spoofed" at everything they did not understand or approve. They drove their English officers to profanity and

gray hair—and at last all came into the fellowship of a big, solid family.

The Nation is awake; awake to the danger for civilization, awake to the fact that antiquated methods of thought as well as of action must vanish if England is to remain. The awakening has not been pleasant or easy, but it has been thorough and soul-stiffening. The result has been a gradually developing efficiency, national as well as individual; an efficiency before which the machine efficiency of the Teuton fades into insignificance, and which carries a mighty lesson for us, who boast of our ability to accomplish wonders. Notwithstanding she had to invent, create and operate not only an Army but a System, and notwithstanding the breakdowns, delays and blunders she had to combat at first, England has for more than two years been able to maintain an Army of millions in a foreign country, carrying them to and fro across a stormy sea infested by perils, has done it without hitch or insupportable loss, and, withal, in a cheery, perfectly matter-of-fact way. Every day and night since 1914 her ships have swept across the Channel with the regularity of clockwork—yet no Englishman thinks of speaking of it as an achievement.

Indeed, England's one surviving insularity still in full force is the English habit of such undue modesty that it is rather an unholy pride in itself! The Briton will not talk of anything he has done, because to do so would be "swank," or to "put on side"; in Americanese, to blow. But he tries so hard to cover up his good deeds they often stand out all

the clearer. In his heart he is deeply grateful and appreciative of the loyalty of his colonies; but he waves aside the heroic devotion of the Indian and the Afrikander, and affects to regard the splendid sacrifices of Canada and Australia and New Zealand as purely a matter of course and so not to be spoken of. "It's not done, you know—"

What the Englishman does not do, the American observer may. I can pay tribute in full propriety to the magnificent qualities, and to the discipline that has modeled the new British Army on lines that made it not only the smoothest working, most cheerful, efficient and responsive Army of all those in the field in 1917, but also the most terrible weapon men ever forged and placed in the hands of any Government. It is at times amusingly—at others annoyingly—sure of itself; but it has behind it the indestructible cohesiveness of the vast Empire from which it comes. The sun that never sets on the Union Jack also never sets on Thomas Atkins, and somehow he seems to have drunk it in, imbibed its majestic qualities of serenity and force, and its ability to blast as well as to vivify and hearten—even if he is bored!

And what of the *poilu,* that heroic individual whose military nickname has justly become the synonym for devotion, for singleness of purpose, for thoughtful patriotism which counts the cost and recks nothing so France be served? A fierce little Zouave named Moinard, found one bitter, snowy night alone in his sector of trench by his Captain, his companions all dead or badly wounded, spoke

for France when he cried cheerily: *"Eh, bien, mon Capitaine*—I'm all alone but here I am!"

*"Here I am!"* At the Marne, in the months along the bloody Somme, at Verdun, along the crimsoned Chemin des Dames to-day, the Frenchman stands like one of his own Alps. Those of us who had known France and her children for years felt before this war that we understood the French mode of thought, the French spirit, as well as aliens can ever understand the thought and spirit of another race. How utterly wrong we all were! We felt that here was a Nation whom super-refinement had tainted with the hectic flush of decline. Nobody seemed to be thoroughly virile in the cities; nobody in the provinces seemed to be gifted with vision beyond the petty affairs of the locality. The very soldiers looked effeminate. How could they stand stiffly in battle against a powerful foe?

Then fire and blood and hatred inundated the whole northern section of this loveliest land in Europe. And what happened? Ah, the soldiers of France! What have they not done? What have they not endured!—the bitter cold water of the flooded winter trenches; the wounds; the fury and horror of the battle-fields; the slow agonies of the hospitals. . . . Heroically they have sacrificed themselves in a war without personality, without any of the ancient glories of warfare.

The full story of the *poilu's* endurance and heroism can never be written. Think of the two artillery observers in a shattered house who watched while a German battery—

half destroyed by their reports to the guns—took a new position close to their post, and telephoned cheerily back: "They're in position now. *Shoot at us! Name of God—shoot!*" Mingled with this pure and lofty heroism runs a crusader-like chivalry no medieval knights ever bettered. A Corporal and his squad on patrol one night found another French petty officer hanging by his feet, horribly crushed and beaten. In a rage, the men swore a solemn oath to treat the first Germans who fell into their hands the same way. Not long after, they caught two *boches*—and because they were half starved, the *poilus* wept with rage at not being able to beat them to death. Instead, they gave them their own last crusts!

The losses France has suffered have been terrible, but they have not sufficed to crush her spirit. Last summer in some quarters, one manifestation of the vicious German propaganda it seems impossible to eradicate anywhere in the world, was an air of despondency, of wishing the war was over, of being willing to admit defeat and make the best terms possible. But with the arrival of the first Americans in France to back her up, the grim resistance of the past year has become a joyous reaction; confidence reigns throughout the French Army as it has rarely reigned before, and there is the delight of union with an Ally of the same gay, mercurial, sentimental temperament to savor every combat, and lead every man straining on to the day when the border shall be crossed. Even in the blackest hours the Frenchman kept right on going back to the front

—even men already minus an arm or a leg or an eye. That they had to go back is perhaps true. No one who knows France, however, will believe for a moment the vast majority recognized that as the thing which drove them back into the fire and blood.

It was, it is, it always will be France! *"France"* is the magic name by which all are conjured, whether teaching a school, working in a factory, or fighting in the line. *"France"* has given Government, Army and people absolute unity of purpose, of thought, of action. The very Sénégalais negroes, themselves but a step removed from savagery, consider themselves Frenchmen! One of them grinned: "First war for me, Congo; second, Morocco; third, *boches*. Three wars against the savages!" This French unity, however, is entirely different from the British unity, in which all the different elements of the Empire, though welded by the common cause, retain their separate individualities. The French, whether home-born or colonial, whether nobleman or negro, possess only one soul, have only one life, recognize only one love—*France!*

How shall an American analyze an American Army—*the* American Army—which isn't an Army yet in the Continental sense? It is a vast agglomeration of Americans struggling to find themselves, striving as no other Americans since the bitter days of the 'sixties have had to strive, to fit their Chinese puzzle together into an Army, to mold themselves into a unit, into a real weapon—to get them the Soul of an Army. What shall we have, and how

shall we get it? Shall we have that intangible something of spirit that knits together our French neighbors in the line beyond any power to unravel! or will it be, when it comes, the blunt, unruffled solidity and cold businesslikeness of our British forebears and present Allies? I believe it will be akin to both, and like neither. As America differs from every other nation in spirit and conditions, so will her Army differ.

American of ten generations of native blood and foreigner newly naturalized are both vivified by that nervous agility of mind as well as of body that is the dominant characteristic of the race: the ability to think and act with speed, certainty and tremendous striking power. The natural gaiety and abandon of American youth, ardent lovers of sport and the fiercest of competition; the wholesome love of danger and taking chances that astonishes and perplexes some of our soberer-minded Allies; the lightness of mind that can instantly throw off burdens and anxieties when the day's work is done, and plunge headlong into recreation; the deadliness of American rage when at last thoroughly aroused, and the conviction that we can set a very wrong world completely right—these things should eventually mold into a truly "formidable American war machine."

Everybody who has seen anything of the new Army, either here or in France or England, has received more or less the same impression. Lord Northcliffe, after visiting one of our huge camps here, called us "a good-natured but

drastic people," and a French correspondent, after spending a week in one of the French camps where the American soldiers are being trained, wrote of the "terrible determination and unbelievable ardor, the energetic attitude and furious, whole-souled execution of every detail of training, surprising even to those who are familiar with the American tenacity of purpose." It may be remembered also that the London newspapers, after seeing the first detachments of our men who marched through their capital, had a little good-natured amusement over the grimness and tigerish attitude of even the youngest, remarking with a somewhat conscious air of superior experience that we would lose that very quickly and become as commonplace about the war as themselves.

They did not know Sammy—begging his pardon for the name he didn't want, but which is sticking to him. The French correspondent already quoted caught a fairer vision of the American attitude. He saw that here were men not yet soldiers, but trying with all their hearts and souls to develop into the best soldiers the world has ever seen, or, as he put it: "Their habit of mind is different from ours. They do not use as their slogan *'On les aura'* (We'll get them) or anything of that sort. . . . Their philosophy is: 'The better I am trained, the stronger I shall be, and the better able to preserve my own life and win the victory.'" That is not the spirit of losing grimness, for every American soldier feels to the bottom of his heart that he

has been called, again in Monsieur Glarner's words, "not to participate in this war, but to end it."

General Pershing, I think, has stated all this with eloquent terseness in one of his cablegrams: "They have entered this war with the highest devotion to duty, and with no other idea than to perform these duties in the most efficient manner possible. They fully realize their obligation to their own people, their friends and the country."

It is not fair to compare the American Army as yet with the veteran Armies of France and England; but, developing side by side with them, will it eventually fit into the same psychological category in which they may be placed? Never—it is, it will continue to be, wholly and typically American. All the stream of immigration that for so many decades has been pouring all sorts of malcontents and good citizens, anarchists and patriots, inchoate captains of industry and worthless tramps into America has failed to wipe out that clear flame of national character, which, however it may flicker for the moment in the political gales and the stress of misunderstood and new conditions, never for one instant ceases to burn.

The American Army will find a Soul, an Army's Soul; but it will also be an American Soul, with all that history has shown that to mean to mankind.

Now that the reason for being allied is clear, and the Allied Armies are neatly classified and pigeonholed, let us

consider what the task before them is, exactly what they must do to justify their existence.

Only one thing! They must prove to the German people —to the people, not to the Government alone—that *Kultur* is a failure. Not until that is done, and done right, will there be any safety for civilization, for *Kultur* is not culture such as we know and value. It is not in any sense the social, mental, spiritual development of a free people. *Kultur* is the ruthless development, at the expense of the individual, of a heartless, soulless State, filled with puppets who move as their rulers by "divine right" pull the strings. The most amazing part of it is that the puppets move willingly—because they believe in the system themselves.

There are only two ways by which we can prove to them that this system, this *Kultur,* is a failure, and a disastrous failure. The first way we are taking at the present moment: sheer brute force. The Teuton respects force. He has had force used on him so long he understands it. The Allied Armies are fighting now to victory. It may take long to win, but the victory is certain. And by defeating Germany decisively, we shall make the German people see that there is something in the world stronger than their vaunted *Kultur,* their militarism. We shall show them, by beating them, that no single Nation or ruler can dominate mankind.

The second way of convincing them of their failure is contingent upon the first. It will be done by opening their eyes, once the victory is won, to what true freedom and

honor, liberty and decency do for a great people. We shall open their eyes to the facts we all know, to the facts we too seldom think about, simply because we know them so well. And "seeing is believing." They will do the rest themselves.

## CHAPTER IV

### LES YANKEES AND THEIR SPECIAL PROVIDENCE

Up in a big, smoky, wide-awake New England town not long ago, after a lecture that apparently gave the audience of business and professional men a new perception of what modern warfare means and is, I was asked a question that largely reflects the national curiosity.

"Tell me," demanded my questioner earnestly, "what sort of an Army we are sending over to France. I mean, what sort of men compose it? How do they behave? Of course, I know what my own boy is—he's all right. But how about the other fellow? Are most of the rest of them the same sort?"

The gentleman who asked that question is a college graduate, a business man controlling a great manufacturing industry, a man who takes a vigorous part in the good works and clean politics movement of his city. Yet he had never given five minutes' intelligent consideration to the "sort of an Army" we are sending to France.

"Look from your office window down upon the street any day at noon hour," I answered. "There is your American Army."

What "sort of an Army," indeed! What "sort of an

Army" could we send? Here is every nation under the sun, from white to black, from gutter blood to the purple ichor of the F. F. V.'s and the Mayflowers, going, in typical American spirit, "to take a chance," but going intelligently. The Georgia negro who said he was "willin' tuh go tuh fight dat-ar ole Kaisuh tuh mek 'im set free de slaves in Belgum" knew quite as well the American spirit he represented as the Harvard graduate who talked learnedly of the inevitable evolution of democratic institutions, etc. Each and all, whether they have reasoned it out or not, sense the wrong and go, certain of victory and ready to pay for it.

It is an Army, moreover, as Lloyd George pithily described it, of "volcanic energy." Something is immediately needed; the Army is told it can not be had—and lo, it appears! Something has to be done; the Army is told by experts it will take three months to get it done—and lo, the Army peels off its tunics, falls to, and the thing is accomplished in fewer weeks than the experts estimated months! Physically, it is practically a perfect body of men, literally the "flower of the country's youth." Weaklings have been carefully eliminated. We shall not be encumbered at the outset, as were Belgium, France and England, by men who can not stand the hardships of campaigning, and who accordingly clog the hospitals and hinder vital operations. The Army also conspicuously contains imagination, good nature, intelligent willingness. If it swaggers a bit, and brags, and regards "foreigners" as a

"funny bunch o' boobs who have to be shown," charge that to its lack of experience.

In some things, alas, it is too experienced! It uses language which is truly not the speech of any other folk under heaven. It is the most uselessly, habitually profane Army in the world; and it does not curse with discrimination or finesse. Some swearing is a liberal course in the joy of living. American profanity, contrariwise, is a mere matter of a bad word between every two good ones. It is guilty, moreover, both officers and men, of looking "upon the wine when it is red," on occasion, and making a deal of good-natured noise about it where it attracts attention. I am quite aware of the denials recently made of this. But I speak of what I personally witnessed. General Pershing made only a relative statement of the Army's morals—*"There never has been a similar body of men to lead as clean lives as our American soldiers in France"*—and that statement is absolutely true; but it should be read with the same intelligence as that with which it was written. At luncheon on the Grands Boulevards one noon I picked up conversation with a French officer who evidently thought me an Englishman. At a near-by table a party of Sammies grew noisier and noisier over their wine. *"V'la, ces Américains!"* gestured the officer. "All they do is drink, drink, drink, and roar, roar, roar!" Fortunately, Sammy's special providences are doing a good deal to lessen this objectionable feature.

On the steamer going over I had been impressed by the

Major-General Pershing and staff at a French aerodrome watching evolutions of the flying men

All that is left of the château at Avrecourt—Somme

The church of Villers-les-Roye

Desolation

Y. M. C. A. only as a clean-cut and companionable crowd of healthy-minded young Americans full of the joy of living—and the desire to college-yell French. Arriving late in the evening in Paris, when my hotel restaurant was closed, I started out to hunt dinner. Passing the most disreputable of the larger music-halls, I was amazed to see the Y. M. C. A. man to whom I had taken most fancy boldly entering it in full uniform. Dinner was forgotten in the scent of news. I followed him in, expecting that when he saw me he would try to sneak away, or lose himself in the throng of *cocottes,* half-drunken civilians and soldiers and general ne'er-do-wells. Not a bit of it! He came straight toward me with outstretched hand.

"What are you doing in here?" I demanded severely. "Is this the sort of thing the Y. M. C. A. sent you over to see?"

He grinned at me with cheerful assurance. "Yep! What *you* doin' here? 's no place for you, if what I've heard is true, and it looks like it," he finished, glancing around.

I repeated my question, and he laughed at me. "Why, friend, I came in here to see what I have to fight! How'm I goin' to talk right to the boys if I don't know what I'm talkin' about? I reckon," he added, sidling over toward a helpless infantryman, "I got a case right now. So long, old man—don't stay too long!" He tackled the intoxicated American, untangled him from his two harpies and a pillar, dismissed the women so sharply they stayed dis-

missed, and led his first case heavily away into the night and safety.

I had a new vision of the Y. M. C. A. from that night. Everywhere I went the story was the same. Temptation, disease, danger, death even, have no terrors for these sturdy American gentlemen in khaki. They may not all follow the same abrupt methods as my friend of the music-hall incident, but they do not scold, they do not preach idle words, they do not balk at anything. More than all, they have the human view-point, and instead of conventional religion which seldom really gets under a man's pelt, they give him service, sympathy, hard work; they make him realize that when he wants anything, whether a sheet of letter-paper or a spiritual bracer, a cup of hot coffee or a pleasant evening's entertainment, they are instantly ready to supply it. They always know what they are talking about, and they measure what they can do only by the limit of their powers.

The Salvation Army, because of its methods, helps a type of man the Y. M. C. A. might not always be able to deal with successfully. It reaches out into the dark on the religious side with tremendous effect, as in the case of the young soldier it saved a week or two before he was left on the field when the charge had passed. "Done for!" sighed the officer searching for wounded. The lad opened his eyes and smiled feebly. "No!" he whispered with his last breath. "Gone west—but *not* done for!"

The Catholic society, the Knights of Columbus, has

joined hands with the other organizations, and is working with them in complete harmony and sympathy. Indeed, one of the most hopeful signs of the day for Christianity is the entire subordination of anything like denominationalism in the merciful work of all these bodies. The initials *K. C.* at first puzzled many of the soldiers. One British Tommy pondered the matter long and soberly, then demanded of an American friend—would that Bairnsfather could have sketched him asking it!—"Siy, mite, wot th' 'ell yuh got a *King's Counsel* in *H*america for?"

The Jewish society, which confines its activities largely to the men of Hebraic extraction and interests, is doing a very important and valuable work that no other body could perform so well. The greatest amount of the religious work is, of course, being handled by the chaplains, who are directly charged with the spiritual welfare of their comrades. But if the chaplain's work ended there, it would be insignificant indeed compared to what he is actually accomplishing. Less gentle than all these, but exceedingly persuasive in their methods, are the M. P.'s, the American Military Police. These husky individuals, chosen for their character, sobriety and size, patrol in pairs wherever the soldiers congregate. Wearing an armband that proclaims their office, and armed with a short nightstick reinforced by the heavy Army automatic pistol for emergencies, they are doing excellent work of the most thankless sort.

Of course, the Red Cross, being by far the largest and most noted of all the American organizations that go with

the Army, is the most universally recognized. And where would Europe be to-day without it? What would have happened in a thousand cases where relief was needed instantly, without red tape or deliberation, when human lives in great numbers hung in the balance, waiting for the help that only quick decision and the speediest action could bring?

One of the finest things we have done in France was the housing of the Red Cross supplies, vast stocks of which were piling up on wharf and street exposed to the weather, since no building big enough to shelter them was available. Some quick scouting was done, and the stables of one of the old Paris cab companies were discovered. The French shook their heads. "They won't do, gentlemen. They are unsanitary, they are full of manure, they have no facilities of any kind. It will take at least three months to put them into shape. Meantime your supplies will be spoiled."

The Red Crossers examined the filthy old stables, talked a little—and less than three weeks later the supplies began moving into a monstrous, clean, cement-floored warehouse which smelled sweet and which was sweet. The French gasped—*"Impossible!"* It was. But American uncommon sense knew any market-gardener would gladly cart away manure without charge. Then the Red Crossers got off their coats, cleaned house, mixed cement and laid floors, built runways, turned carpenter for the nonce, and behold, there was a vast, dry, modern storehouse. "Volcanic energy," indeed!

The most serious moral problem our Army has to face

affects not only the man at the front, but America itself; and it is one almost impossible of comprehension to those who have not been across within the last year or so. For a number of years there has been a steady and gratifying increase in the general morality of this country. Vice has been suppressed to such an extent throughout many wide regions that the general moral tone of the community has been distinctly raised. Europe as a whole is more immoral, and more openly, shamelessly immoral now than ever before. The task of the Army chiefs is therefore infinitely more difficult than if conditions approached normal. The temptations which surround the soldiers are so tempting, the nervous strain to which they are being subjected so great, the social conditions so strange and abnormal to them, the persistence of the vicious element so unflagging, that the sturdiest nature is bound to be affected.

The matter of venereal disease is only a part, and not a vital part, of the situation. The Army medical staff is caring for that, and no soldier will be returned to this country who is not first completely cured of any taint. Far worse than the physical is the moral contamination. That no authority can prevent. But the signs are hopeful. America is waking up, and General Pershing has his greatest ally in the mothers of the United States. From Maine to California they are realizing that this is their problem; they are trying to reach the boys here, to follow them with the letters that "keep the home fires burning" in every soldier heart. But, O Mothers of America, to safeguard the boys

for whom you have suffered and cared, *don't preach—don't scold—don't nag! VERBOTEN* signs will never hold an American! But you can make your boys feel their honor, their custody of your honor, of America's honor perhaps most of all. And do not stop there. The girls are an equally important task. Fill each and every one of them with the sense of her responsibility to herself, to society, to America. Give them the picture of wifehood and motherhood as a background. Make them see that thoughtless immolation upon the altar of any selfish hero is not only all wasted and ruinous, but damning to the hero himself. Do it lovingly, as well as thoroughly, so that when the boys come cheerily marching home again, into an atmosphere of adulation close to worship, they will find neither temptation nor sentimental weakness, but starry-eyed, fearless women fit to be mates for them who have risked their lives for honor's sake. And meantime, while, in the land of strife, your boys are beyond your reach save for the infrequent mails, be comforted, O Mothers, by the knowledge that Sammy's very special providences, like scouts flung out far afield, are keeping alive and powerful your own mother-spirit of guardianship and love—the spirit that is to keep the Army clean and wholesome and fit to return home.

Already *Messieurs les Sammées* have made a deeper dent in the French consciousness than five generations of American tourists and diplomatic visitors. I think France expected an inundation of something half-way between a

Comanche Indian and a London Johnny, if such a combination could possibly be. What she actually received astonished, perplexed, delighted, amused and thrilled her. The black-eyed girls who threw flowers in the path of the tramping thousands wept unashamed. The children, who looked at these khaki giants at first shyly and then with awe, quickly ensconced themselves in the hearts of the men, and in return were promptly spoiled as only Americans can spoil children.

Sammy's first meetings with the avaricious cabmen were not so happy, though amusing to the bystander. Usually when the police arrived they found the cabmen nursing a bloody nose or a cauliflower ear, and wondering what in the name of a little tin can had happened! In the towns near which the men are training, a more unfortunate and quite as easily accounted for phase of temperament manifested itself. A soldier would go into a *débit de tabac* or tiny tobacco-shop, and secure a ten-cent package of cigarettes, tender five or ten francs in payment, and when change—exceedingly scarce now in France—could not be made, instead of going somewhere else for it himself, would mumble something and leave the note, going off with his cigarettes, not exactly happy, but not unhappy, either. An hour later a *poilu,* tossing down the customary half-franc for the same cigarettes, would be met with the polite statement that the price had gone up. Result: Madame loses the sale, *poilu* is furious at her, and then, when he discovers it is the American who has unconsciously elevated

the high cost of smoking, freezes up in a way bewildered Sammy can not understand.

This reputation for being a "good spender" has extended all over France, and in Paris especially, the Grands Boulevards love *Sammée* dearly, even if he is inclined to be rather difficult at times, and insistent upon having exactly what he orders and not something said to be "the same thing" or "just as good." Every French girl manages to make friends with a big, brown, open-handed American, the trees along the Italiens and Capucines and beside the Madeleine sheltering low-voiced conversations and sign-language understandings. For *Sammée* plays vigorously as he works, and he is chronically "from Missouri," whether it be in learning to flirt or to bomb a trench. He takes to grenade-throwing and bombing with all the aptitude of a natural baseball player, grasping the difference in the throwing method more quickly than any other troops. He makes a game out of bayonet drill with the dummies, and digs trenches as blithely as he goes into the big Chamber of Horrors for the gas-drills. Whatever he touches is electrified; his teachers have to keep on the run to hold his pace!

The instructor at one of the largest aerodromes in France, where some of our naval flyers are being trained, has grown worn and gray under the trials they have unconsciously imposed upon him. The young sailors are not only absolutely fearless, but they insist on joking with death in its most sudden and violent forms. Not long ago,

when one of these young daredevils went up for his "solo," or initial flight alone, he stalled his engine while still climbing. The machine slowed, stopped, wavered—began those horrible zigzags known as the "falling leaf drop." The distracted instructor cried out: *"Oh, mon Dieu—il est mort! Il est mort!* Oh, my God, he's killed, he's killed!"

The youngsters in the field laughed at him, and one young wretch replied to the face of horror he turned upon such brazen callousness: "Don't you worry, *mussoor*. He'll land O. K. See if he don't!"

At that moment the novice got his engine restarted, tilted his planes too far, and came roaring down straight toward the earth in a nose-dive that looked absolutely fatal. Still the boys laughed at his wild gyrations. The Frenchmen could not, and waited silently for the frightful crash. It never came. A few feet above the ground, the nervy flyer gave his planes a violent twist, hoisted his machine almost vertically with a jerk, and finally landed without a bump. He was distinctly peevish at being scolded for the risks he had taken.

Another man, mistaking the course of the wind, came down with it blowing across his machine from side to side, and was drifted into an orchard, where he crashed among the apple trees. Every one ran when the smash was heard, and the Frenchmen, from instructor to mechanics, expected to find him crushed. When they reached the spot, he was sitting calmly on the ground, eating one of the

apples shorn off by the fall that had torn loose his wings, and gently dropped his unhurt *fuselage* between the trunks.

Unlike their French and British brethren, the Americans are talkative about their exploits, and there is freshness and charm to their stories, even when the tales are so obviously exaggerated as to be made of the whole cloth. Sammy exercises his imagination, and knows it is so good he enjoys listening to it himself.

The man who commands this splendid Army is Major-General John J. Pershing. Every one in America speaks of Pershing, and very few know anything about him. To those who know the man as well as the soldier, his selection for the greatest military post America has ever been able to give any man seemed most happy and fortunate. Fifteen years ago it was the writer's good fortune in the distant Philippines to meet and know Captain Pershing, to whom fell the soul-testing task of governing unruly Moroland. Other professional soldiers had been there before him and left no record of importance. Captain Pershing made the Moro understand once and for all that an American "Yes!" meant yes, and an American "No!" meant no. A strict disciplinarian, but just and cool-headed, he has shown himself able to digest facts before forming a working opinion; and, more than that, when once his opinion is formed, refusing to be swayed by every wind of chance.

Fortunately for the world, he has the respect and confidence of the chiefs of the other Allied Nations and Ar-

mies and the devotion of his own officers and men. The soldierly qualities that enabled him to accomplish so much in the Philippines are enabling him to-day to keep everybody in the American Army in France literally on the jump, working as hard as he himself works, performing miracles in the only way they can be performed, through that very Biblical combination of complete faith and works. Without any of the erratic and uncertain qualities of genius, General Pershing has that other quality of it, the "capacity for taking infinite pains," that augurs much for his ability to carry his big, happy, wholesome, schoolboy-spirited Army to the victory that only a big ideal and a big man can make possible.

## CHAPTER V

### THE BRITISH IN FRANCE: AN HISTORICAL CONTRAST

To THE student of history there is unusual significance and interest in the presence of armed but friendly British forces in France; of significance because it marks a vital realization of the dream of the late King Edward VII, of gracious memory, who strove for a closer intercourse between the two Nations, and of interest because it is a complete reversal of the one-time common policy of self-interest that so long held them at swords' points. For France and England not only have not always been Allies, but much more often have fought each other bitterly, once, in the so-called Hundred Years' War, for more than a century.

All through northern France there are monuments and memories of the battle flux, when victory rested sometimes with one side, sometimes with the other: the tablet at Abbeville to heroic Ringois, who preferred death over a cliff to renouncing his king and country—France; the slab over the spot in the old market-place of Rouen, where the English burned the shining maid, Jeanne d'Arc; the ruin of Richard the Lion-Heart's Château Gaillard—where Philippe Auguste made good his threat of capture—still crowning the hilltop of P'tit Andely and an exquisite vision of the Seine; the inexpugnable abbey-fortress of

Mont St. Michel, striving heavenward from the water in pile upon pile to its piercing spire and saint; most vital of all, the Bayeux tapestry, that strip of seamless linen whose faded needlework tells graphically the stirring tale of the French raid forever famous as the Norman Conquest of 1066, with as universal a humanity and appeal as though it were a series of snapshots for a twentieth-century sensational newspaper.

The present pacific Anglo-Saxon Conquest of France completely reverses the Norman Conquest of England. Almost a thousand years separate them in time; the whole range of human purpose and principle, in activity. The English of 1066 fought hard and surrendered grudgingly; the French of 1914 welcomed their whilom enemies with cries of joy. And instead of conquering as their sires had once been conquered, the "First Hundred Thousand" of Kitchener's "contemptible little army" and its millions of gallant successors, though they bore arms of more frightful potentialities than 1066 ever dreamed of, won their way by the richest gifts ever one people gave another—limitless gold, boundless good will, unnumbered human sacrifices.

Xenophon and Cæsar were their own war correspondents, and saw to it that the homefolks got suitable news. One wonders, in the light of modern warfare, with its spies and its censors, its correspondents and political visitors wandering about the different fronts, how "The Retreat of the Ten Thousand" and *"De Bello Gallico"* would have been

told had a layman or a political opponent of the commanding general been able to write and smuggle the manuscript past the censorship! General Byng's laconic account of his famous tank advance was a mere skeleton, for instance, compared with the news account of the same thing, with its ringing anecdote of the commander who "expected every tank to do its damnedest!"

Before entering the British lines, I gave my word I would not reveal certain things. Then, by a curious pair of mistakes, I blundered squarely into a forbidden zone, was put in the way of becoming dangerous to myself as a repository of military information really of value, and by another blunder got safely away with no other evil result than a heart which sometimes even yet flutters when I think of the connection so frequently established between alleged spies and stone walls! Like the small boy who has accidentally discovered the Christmas presents on the top shelf of the closet, I have seen a most amazing number of interesting things, and fairly burst with eagerness to tell. But the most interesting may not even be hinted at. Only "Xenophon" or "Cæsar" will ever hint at them, in the "Official Communiqué" which—to those who know—is aggravation personified.

The British line of communications leading to the front begins on the English Channel coast, darts across the stormy strait in a lane guarded and swept and watched by fleet destroyers and cruisers, trawlers and minesweepers, and, on reaching the French coast, sweeps north and east

through Belgium and France to the bloody swales around Nieuport and blasted "Wipers" (Ypres), Arras and the other focal points in that general region. It is historic soil to the English. Their troops to-day pass not far from Crécy-en-Ponthieu, where, in 1346, the British longbows slaughtered more Frenchmen than there had been live Britons when the fight began. Froissart relates that the fourteenth-century British "clothyard" shafts swirled down upon the heavily armored French knights like a snowstorm, and threw them and their mired chargers into writhing confusion in the sticky mud. He might almost have been writing of a twentieth-century shrapnel barrage, whose tufts of smoke, blown by the breeze, would pass very well for just such a deadly snowstorm.

To pass over the main line of the British communications is to have a slight appreciation of what the machinery of modern war means behind the lines. Without it the man in the fighting trench could not keep his post a day. Never for an instant must this machinery be dislocated—or some gun will go without its meed of shells, some dressing station without the vital chloroform or bandages, some contingent without its food or supplies. Guns and men and animals mount up into the dozen or more millions. That means nothing: nobody knows what a million of anything is like. But watch an ammunition convoy, and begin to understand. Every gun of five-inch caliber or greater requires twenty-five five-ton motor truckloads of shells every day to keep in continuous action. Put a hundred yards'

space between each car and its successor, and the convoy trails along for a mile and a half. That feeds one gun one day. In the "big push" undertaken every so often, the guns sometimes stand almost wheel to wheel for the whole width of the attack. The task of feeding them is titanic; bringing up shells is only one item among thousands.

It is a sweating, toiling, patient river, this main road, whose stream of everything men at war can need has flowed steadily for more than three years in an ever-increasing flood. The congestion at Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street, New York, is its only possible comparison, and that is hopelessly inadequate. And notwithstanding the unnumbered troops and auxiliaries, the guns big and little, the horse-drawn caissons and limbers, the dog-drawn machine-guns of the Belgians—both Armies use this road, which further complicates traffic and temper alike—the snorting steam road-rollers and the inevitable French and Belgian farm wagons, which never get out of the way when they can help it, Tommy Atkins calmly preempts half the battered road, tears it to pieces and then proceeds without haste or waste to remake it. Staff officers fly by at sixty miles an hour and drench him with showers of mud or choke him with cutting chalk-dust. He wipes his eyes clear, swears vigorously, and falls to again. A regimental-train rumbles heavily along and holds up his work for five, perhaps ten, minutes. Thomas leans on his shovel or pick or corn-broom, lights his pipe and ponders like the philosopher he is.

Color is added to the kaleidoscope by the canal alongside, where dainty-looking little French monitors with one very persuasive naval gun glide noiselessly by under their own steam—craft that would float in a heavy dew, but able to back up the land troops with their havoc-making diapason. Great French canal-boats almost awash with precious loads of coal, timber, food and all the paraphernalia of the war of to-day, trail along at a snail's pace in tow of trim-looking tugs. British canal-boats, too, cleaner of line than their Gallic companions, built of steel every one and populated by Tommies in khaki, snail past with a sergeant at the wheel, smoking his pipe and appearing vastly comfortable in his unusual surroundings—"a bloomin' bargee, 'im—wot?" Here and there a tremendous British chain-dredge idles by the bank, waiting a call to deepen or widen the shallow flood, or a flock of stripped-down Tommies repairs a wooden barge, builds a new hospital-boat, or erects something of temporary value on the farther bank.

Fritz has the range of that section of the road nearest the front to a hair. Most often he shells it by night, evidently with the intention of interfering with the movement of supplies and the transfer of wounded—and always, when skimming over it at breakneck speed after dusk, one has an uneasy consciousness of that lurking monster gun that throws a shell nearly five feet long and ten or twelve inches thick a distance of thirty-eight kilometers—a mere trifle of something more than twenty-five miles!

Shooting at a twenty-five-mile range! Imagine Edward

III's bowmen returned, to see their fellows brought down by a missile they could hear but not see coming, fired from a gun as far away from them as Boulogne is from Folkstone! The wars of the fourteenth century were won by the personal vision and skill of the commander; so were wars as recently as Napoleon's time. But to-day science is the brain and very life-blood of warfare. The quartermaster keeps the troops supplied and happy because of the exact, scientific disposition and action of every atom in his vast department. The lorries have their instructions as to what turnings they must make, and how fast they may go, even what they may and may not do if they run into shell-fire, and a man at the tailboard who notifies the chauffeur to turn out if a fast vehicle wishes to pass. The geologist dabs colors on a map which tells the ordnance and intelligence officers—the latter nicknamed "Brains" because he knows everything!—"Here you may mine, and here you must not; here it is safe to dig trenches; yonder any excavation will instantly fill up with water or cave in." The very weather-man, once so hooted at, plays a vital rôle. Napoleon's gunners paid no attention to changes of temperature because they served their pieces in full view of the enemy. To-day the artillerist, registering with perfect accuracy upon a target anywhere from one mile to twenty miles distant, must change the elevation of his guns with each change of temperature sent him by the weather bureau —or drop his shells upon his own troops. Not one thing is left to chance or personal skill.

From a painting by Henry Farré

A fight between an aeroplane and a hydroplane. One of Captain Bone's daring battles

The feeling of hostility between France and England was not seriously modified until the Victorian Era. France by that time had had opportunity to realize the falseness of the Napoleonic ambitions and the value of a solid foundation for her empire, and England, under the tempering influence of Queen Victoria and her advisers, was looking out upon mankind in general with eyes whose vision had been clarified by her experience of 1776. Since the beginning of the friendly relations of the two nations, the cities where the English once struggled to maintain a foothold solid enough to enable the King of England to add to his titles "of France" have developed wonderfully, especially the Channel ports most directly in touch with their British opposites. Boulogne, for instance, grew a thriving English trade and colony, with one citizen in every fifty a Briton in 1906—this within a century of the time when, on the chalk cliffs behind, Napoleon gathered the vastest army of his time, two hundred thousand strong—think of that as a "vast" army!—to invade England, began his huge memorial column, and rather prematurely struck off coins to pay his troops, each piece boldly inscribed "coined in London," or something to that effect!

Of these ancient seaports, the one nearest the front, still full of helpless women and children, and plastered over with signs instructing the inhabitants where to shelter in case of bombardment or air raids, sleeps but fitfully. Heavy British guns roar nightly responses to the German artillery's raucous bellowing. Houses and public buildings

are pock-marked with shrapnel, partly blown to bits by the explosions of aerial torpedoes and bombs, and racked every so often by the huge shells that drop in to keep garrison and population on their toes. Half a mile nearer the German lines, in a dreamy little *plage* or coast resort, the "movie" Casino lost a door and most of its end one day last summer as the result of an H. E. (the abbreviation of "high explosive") bomb. A few rough boards were nailed over the wound, and when I was there the crowd filed in just the same to see the latest film, with calm disregard of possible danger.

A little farther away one can sleep o' nights, though the rumble of the heavy guns is always evident, and the marks of terrific maltreatment are visible everywhere. One can dine well here, too—with the *entrée* to an officers' mess or the restaurants operated now largely for the benefit of the khaki-clad invaders. What the civilians eat I do not pretend to know, though the markets seem well stocked, and the butcher-shops replete with the horrid-looking skinned carcasses customary in France, repulsively suggestive of anatomical charts in color. It takes an effort to eat even a rabbit after seeing what he looks like under that soft and pretty pelt!

The "Golden Sands" of the Picard coast that link the famous medieval towns together like gray shells upon a shining silken cord, have known the English—swarms of them —as tourists, "summer people" and semi-invalids. How

different the English the "Golden Sands" welcome now. Here were pretty children, as in other days, but very few and very quiet now, even in their play; here were parents and friends and families as in those peaceful years, but all with the undertone of shadow in their once clear English eyes; here were pretty English girls, but instead of wearing bathing-suits, they were garbed in the sober dignity of nurses. But the young men, the smiling and gallant young Englishmen who used to overflow sands and links and tea-rooms—! They lay in cots, they reclined in wheel-chairs, they sat on the grass, they pottered feebly about on sticks —or they lie forever dreaming in the little, square, white-fenced acres where only unpainted wooden crosses tell the story, and the gay, friendly dance of the French poppies above their fast-closed eyes keeps aflame the torch their hands have passed on to their comrades.

It was a brilliant afternoon last September, when the dancing sapphire of the Channel was blurred here and there by hazy blobs of gray ships in the distance, when officers with golf bags over their shoulders played unconcernedly over the hilly cliff links, and convalescent Tommies walked out with French and English maidens along the chalky roads, on which German prisoners toiled leisurely under the sharp eyes of British sentries, that I came upon the great hospital and cemetery section. Previous English invasions have planted hundreds of their dead in the fertile soil of France; but now—! In America we

know in a vague sort of way that men are killed in such a war as this; but to come suddenly upon a concrete display of this abstract fact brings the truth home with a shock.

Here, the heroic dead; yonder, working leisurely, the healthy, sturdy, contented prisoners, evidencing in every possible way, patched and ragged though they were, their satisfaction at being out of the hell they had created. Their air of insolent superiority to the men who had captured them was maddening. I wondered that the British could treat them like men. The irony of life jarred heavily. They, who boasted frightfulness, lived; these others, who fought for everything right and decent and chivalric, won the supreme decoration of war—the wooden cross.

British and French are wise, nevertheless, in the treatment they give the prisoners. It is totally undeserved, it is exceedingly costly, and it requires a large number of soldiers as guards; yet it is a policy that will perhaps go further in civilizing the German than any political measure or trade restriction that can be taken when the actual fighting is done. It is an education for these men, who from boyhood have been taught to despise the French and hate the English. The treatment they are accorded as prisoners is compelling them to see that the Englishman is not born with hoofs and a tail, that the Frenchman is no swaggering blow-hard unable to make good his word. And when they go back to a beaten Germany, however they may mourn the downfall of their politicians and warriors, they will know also how they have been systematically lied to

and brutalized by wilful misstatements of everything—even of Germany's own needs and aims. France and England by their generosity and political sagacity are planting fertile seeds far deeper in the German heart than any blundering German wiseacre of efficiency and *Kultur* knows.

Another of these gray old Picard ports is completely transformed. The best hotel is the H. Q. of the B. R. C., or in plain American, the headquarters of the British Red Cross; all the other hotels are chock-ablock with British khaki; and truculent English M. P.'s, or Military Police, regulate the dense traffic as smartly and coolly as London Bobbies, at the same time keeping a watchful eye on the soldiery forever passing among the throngs on the almost impassable streets.

The harbor, hardly more than a slim estuary, through which the ebullient tides rush at racehorse speed, is congested beyond belief with what looks to the landsman's uneducated eye like a hopeless tangle of fishing smacks and war craft, passenger liners, troopships, cargo-boats and others, all in bedraggled gray war paint, and all disgorging or engulfing unimaginable quantities of men and supplies. Every wharf is a mountain of boxes, crates, barrels, packages of every sort, bearing the Broad Arrow of His Majesty's Service. Day and night the loading and unloading goes on at high pressure, almost without a break. Where and how is all this vast matériel transported? It is always there, it is coming in and going out every day in a stream of incomparable magnitude, yet it never overflows. The long quays

can hold, at the utmost, perhaps two days' cargoes. British thoroughness and scientific management is taking care of it all in a silent, unemotional, perfectly methodical procedure devoid of either haste or lost motion, that gets it up to the front or back to England without perceptibly unhinging the usual business of the community.

By night the town tucks its war-weary head under its wing and tries to hide in silent darkness from the prowling enemy in the air. But by day its medieval streets are as jammed as lower Broadway, its shop-windows a curiosity, full of foreign, mostly American goods. English signs are everywhere. Often the most patently American articles are boldly announced as "British Made" to tempt the wary buyer who nowadays asks where a thing is manufactured. Almost every State, from Maine to California, is represented by everything imaginable, from a huge machine to chewing-gum, from whisky to the weekly with the largest circulation, all jumbled together in an endless hodge-podge along the Grande Rue and its tributary side streets. The climax of Americanism, when I was there, was reached in a black-and-white sign, fifty feet long by ten feet high, spread across the façade of a "Cinema" theater—CHARLES CHAPLIN TO-DAY. Four years ago the staid old city would have gagged over such an irregularity; now it piles Pelion on Ossa and clamors for more!

Every one of these cities is a rumor-factory, and once in a while, if one has the stomach to laugh at horrors, the daily fable brings forth something so utterly impossible it

# AVIS

# (Texte français)

Tous les habitants de la maison, à l'exception des enfants au-dessous de 14 ans et de leurs mères, ainsi qu'à l'exception des vieillards, doivent se préparer pour être transportés dans une heure et demie.

Un officier décidera définitivement quelles personnes seront conduites dans les camps de réunion. Dans ce but, tous les habitants de la maison doivent se réunir devant leur habitation : en cas de mauvais temps, il est permis de rester dans le couloir. La porte de la maison devra rester ouverte. Toute réclamation sera inutile. Aucun habitant de la maison, même ceux qui ne seront pas transportés, ne pourra quitter la maison avant 8 heures du matin (heure allemande).

Chaque personne aura droit à 30 kilogrammes de bagages; s'il y aura un excédent de poids, tous les bagages de cette personne seront refusés sans égards. Les colis devront être faits séparément pour chaque personne et munis d'une adresse lisiblement écrite et solidement fixée. L'adresse devra porter le nom, le prénom et le numéro de la carte d'identité.

Il est tout à fait nécessaire de se munir dans son propre interet d'ustensiles pour boire et manger, ainsi que d'une couverture de laine, de bonnes chaussures et de linge. Chaque personne devra porter sur elle sa carte d'identité. Quiconque essaiera de se soustraire au transport sera impitoyablement puni.

ETAPPEN-KOMMANDANTUR.

*Lille, Avril 1916.*

## NOTICE

(French Text)

All the inhabitants of the house, with the exception of children under 14, and their mothers, and also of old people, must prepare themselves for transportation in an hour-and-a-half's time.

An officer will definitely decide which persons will be taken to the concentration camps. For this purpose all the inhabitants of the house must assemble in front of it. In case of bad weather, they may remain in the passage. The door of the house must remain open. All appeals will be useless. No inmate of the house, even those who will not be transported, may leave the house before 8.0 a. m. (German time).

Each person will have a right to 30 kilogrammes of luggage; if anyone's luggage exceeds that weight, it will all be rejected without further consideration. Packages must be separately made up for each person and must bear an address legibly written and firmly fixed on. This address must include the surname and the Christian name, and the number of the identity card.

It is absolutely necessary that people should provide themselves in their own interest with eating and drinking utensils, as well as with a woolen blanket, strong shoes and linen. Everyone must carry his identity card on his person. Anyone attempting to evade transportation will be punished without mercy.

Lille, April, 1916.

ETAPPEN-KOMMANDANTUR.*

*The "Etappen" are the German military depots on the lines of communication.

seems an infinitely delightful bit of poetic justice or humor. Not a great while before, according to one story I heard, the Germans bombed a certain military camp near the coast, where the French had a couple of thousand Annamite Chinese coolies in wooden barracks. Close to this labor compound was a barrack full of *boche* prisoners. The flyers came down close enough to make sure they would not hit their own people, and carefully blew up a goodly number of the helpless Annamites. Bombing a military establishment being, of course, a perfectly ethical proceeding, the authorities had no valid objection. The Annamites had! After the mess was cleaned up, they held a private council of war, decided that retaliatory measures were required, and before the guards and sentries could interfere, had raged through the prisoners, cutting the heads almost off a considerable number with their long, heavy knives. Whether the tale is true or not, it is one of innumerable others which illustrate the risks, natural and freakish alike, to which every one along the front is exposed dav by day and almost hour by hour.

Nearly five hundred years ago, British and French stood side by side in the market-place of Rouen, while bells boomed above the flames blooming around the sweet white face of Jeanne d'Arc. The great Hundred Years' War was drawing to its close. Once more a great war is drawing to its close. Once more British and French stand side by side. But in this twentieth century the mighty spirit of that

Maid of Orléans who once led her countrymen against the British hosts, now rises prophetic and energizing above the combined Armies to wave them on* through whatever may befall of danger or sacrifice, to the victory already shadowed in the *Götterdämmerung* slowly but irresistibly descending upon the war gods of the Hun.

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*On several occasions bodies of French troops have reported that in the heat of action they have beheld a shining vision of the Maiden Saint.

## CHAPTER VI

### ALONG THE BRITISH FRONT

The Staff Motor whirled along a deserted white ribbon of road between tall poplars etched black against the sunset skies. It was well after seven, and the air was chill with the dew. Ahead of us somewhere in the rolling country that dipped and rose like the Atlantic swell lay the American Visitors' Château, a lovely little sixteenth-century castle with slender turrets and a moat, where for a few days two other Americans and myself were to be guests of the British Government. Not a sound but the purring exhaust of the motor could be heard; we were the only living things in the whole vast landscape.

No one spoke. Slowly the radiance died, and the stars came out. Our Staff Captain leaned forward in his seat beside the driver, screwing his monocle a little tighter into his eye and listening intently as he stared into the distance. Behind, we three looked and listened too.

Boom! Boom! Boom! *Boom-boom-boom-boom!*

Low and heavy and hoarse, hardly audible at first, came the sullen grumble in Fritz's throat many miles away at the front, as he began his twilight "strafe." The sky flashed with a wicked red glare like heat-lightning. In that lurid instantaneous blaze woods and spires and the figures of

Captain and chauffeur splashed the sky with inky silhouettes. Twenty miles away somebody was "catchin' it 'ot," and we, far off, could hear the rumble, see the diabolical beauty of it, nothing more—the distant hiccups of Mars, reveling in his illuminated palace.

Down into a little valley dropped the motor, whirled off to one side through a field, darted through a close-growing copse, and honked for the gateway to the Château grounds. Again we honked at the drawbridge, while a solitary white swan peered up at us curiously from the flickering waters of the darkly forbidding moat. Not forbidding in the least was the yawning stone portal, but delicately Gothic and inviting. So was the carven door of the structure itself —beyond the cobbled court—where lights twinkled out to make us welcome.

The great reception hall, from which a broad flight of oak stairs wound upward into the dark, was decorated in hit-or-miss fashion with German trophies of all sorts, from helmets and gas-masks to shell splinters like forked lightning. To my astonishment, the restoration of the structure, which had been variously maltreated in its somewhat stormy past, had been a restoration for use, not beauty. The wooden paneling was glaringly of the cottage-by-the-sea order; only where the carven stone of graceful window or delicate molding peeped at one did the age and original beauty disclose themselves. But though the restoration was modern, the restorer evidently was not—he had forgotten or ignored modern heating, despite the dank autumnal

fogs that settle low in the little valley. In the salon, where every one gathered for those delightful evenings after dinner, a monstrous medieval fireplace crackled cheerily, and scorched our faces and toes. But only the generous assortment of tall and squatty, dark and brilliant bottles on the table could dispel that inner chill we Americans all felt.

Here gathered men of every stamp and every degree of ability and individuality. Our hosts were geniality and consideration personified. One officer was a professional soldier with a long Indian record, and a Britannic calm nothing could shake. Another was a member of one of the most famous regiments England has—and a Mississippi planter of twenty years' experience, whose cultivated English was toned by the soft, languid drawl of our own South. Another had been a courtier before the war sent him to the front in a regiment noted for its fieriness and daring. Each one of them possessed—and exercised—personal charm, and did his utmost to show and tell us Americans everything we could legitimately expect.

Right at the start, as a dessert after breakfast, we were initiated into the mysteries of the gas-mask, drilled in putting it on and wearing it, shown how to carry it ordinarily —hanging at one's side—and how, when in danger of a gas attack, it must be opened and strapped close up under the chin, where the face can be plunged into it at the first whiff of the sickly, hardly perceptible danger. The mask itself is not bad, but the clothespin clamped over one's nose

—suggestive of beauty-parlor treatments!—compelling the wearer to breathe through the mouth-tube only, is distinctly fretting. I had anticipated a genuine drill, in a gas-filled chamber, but that, it seems, is reserved for the fighting men.

The Staff motors of the Château, speedy little low-hung cars painted a greenish khaki tone, are distinguishable by the white stencil on their sides of a somewhat impressionistic French castle that looks enough like the real thing to give the cars quite an air, and "set up" their occupants over the passengers in vehicles bearing less notable heraldic devices. Day after day in these manorial equipages our guardians carried us to different parts of the front—and the "back," which is quite as important—and in one respect only were they adamant: they would not let us risk our lives as recklessly as some of us wished in our endeavors to see and know everything.

What does the "front" look like? Is it a ditch filled by soldiers in khaki, leaning toward a similar, opposite trench, and, behind each, field guns neatly arrayed in batteries?

Standing on Vimy Ridge one brilliant September afternoon, I looked out over the slightly undulating plain that stretches away to Lens and Liévin, where both the British and German forces were entrenched. The two towns, save for obvious damage, looked entirely normal and quiet; even with powerful binoculars I could find not one trace of guns, trenches, camouflage, or anything that looked in the least

like a very active sector of the firing line. Not an Englishman was in sight, but far in the background, two or three thousand yards distant, I could occasionally pick up a German with my glasses as he darted from one house or shelter to another. Nothing else moved.

Lens is the center of a great coal district. Near it, and dotting the plain to our left, were the wrecks of some coal-mine structures, huge, gaunt, forbidding skeletons, lugubriously black and silent—wounded Martians, they seemed. Right at our feet, partly concealed in a scooped-out hollow in the Ridge, was a monstrous nine-point-two British howitzer. Over it spread a messy-looking network of cordage and wire, supporting a tangle of branches, grass, scraps of cloth and burlap, and some painted bits of canvas—*camouflage* for the probing eye of the enemy observer, be he concealed in an O. P. (Observation Post)—on the front everything is called by its initials—or scooting far overhead in a flying-machine. Beneath the screen the silent monster itself was no neat black or shining steel weapon, but a tricky figment of the imagination, shapeless and weird, a horribly smeared and dappled thing of ungainly curves and blobs of confusing colors. The futurist painters must have had prevision of this war! About the breech lolled some artillerists, contentedly taking their ease. Here a man wrote a letter, another sprawled on his back in a comfortable dream, a third worked about the breech mechanism, a fourth smoked his pipe as he cleaned his personal equipment, while the officer lay in a makeshift chair reading a novel in pink covers.

The whole sector was quiet. It was more than quiet: it was silent, absolutely silent, with the Sunday stillness of a country road in summertime, when the buzz of a fly is a loud sound. These intervals of silence are one of the great features of the front. They come at night, by day; at that ghastly, greenish-gray-heliotrope hour of before-dawn which the poetic French know as *l'heure mauve,* "the mauve hour;" often between violent artillery actions. No one can tell when they will come nor how long they will last. They mean no relaxation of vigilance or hatred, and sometimes they end in a lively local strafe. But whenever they come, they are a blessed relief to nerves tortured by shrieking shells and constant explosions.

The sun poured down upon a glinting pool just this side of wrecked Lens, and bathed the shattered houses there with beauty. A crow suddenly cawed loudly. It was as startling as the boom of a gun. The artillerists looked up inquiringly. A dull boom shattered the calm somewhere out in front of us—it seemed as if the crow had given the signal to end the quiet. A mile away a puff of dust rose in the plain—Fritz was "sending a few over," evidently in the hope of hitting something British. The puff of dust rose, expanded, spread out into fan-shape, slowly blew away on the light breeze. While it was still expanding, we heard the distant note of the gun that had fired the shell. The gunners of the big howitzer returned to their peaceful preoccupations. Another shell came over. This time it fell a quarter of a mile nearer us, and we could hear the whistle

as well as the dull blast of its explosion. My Staff Captain —we were alone that day—thought we had better take cover in a convenient shell-hole; perhaps we had already drawn attention to the O. P. near which we had been standing.

A six-inch shell-crater made an uneasy mattress where we lay on our stomachs and watched Fritz "feel" blindly, as the artillerymen say, for something near us. His big gun fired methodically about once a minute, covering every square of the terrain in his particular field with beautiful precision. Aladdin's genii worked no more terrible or inspiring wonders. An already ruined house, a bit of road, a tree, a piece of field rose in dusty smoke and vanished. I watched it, breathless with the hellish beauty of each thunderous burst—at which my dry-nurse yawned or gave a casual grunt of disapproval.

And now a new noise became distinctly audible. Half a mile or so behind us, a British aeroplane took wing, and cruised nonchalantly up and down, to and fro along the front, sailing with the motionless ease of a frigate bird at sea, only its eyes moving as it peered hither and yon, hunting for that German battery that was making the rumpus. Not a German machine was in the air—Fritz was "totally blind" that afternoon, and his gunners had to do what they could without the aid of their aerial observers. The big British machine covered the trenches in our sector thoroughly, and then calmly sailed across the German rearward lines, zigzagging to and fro above a furious burst

of "Archies" (anti-aircraft guns) that "let go" at it in a beautifully timed and methodical fire so ranged as to cover a circular area at six different altitudes. Our British friend simply flirted his tail defiantly, made a beautiful dive like a gull striking for a fish—and moved on, replying insolently with two or three spatters of shot from his machine-gun which said plainly enough, "Oh, piffle!"

Half an hour later the four winds shook with a rushing, mighty noise coming out of nothing from nowhere; soul-shaking, inconceivably awful. Who and what and how many were they, these flying dæmons so far aloft, so perfectly tinted the strongest glass could not reveal them? Twenty long, ominous minutes they were in passing. Not until afterward did we know we had heard the gathering of a great squadron of naval planes sent over in reprisal to bomb a German garrison and munitions town. I am glad not to have seen them: seen, their mysterious awfulness would have been lost.

All this time our howitzer was silent. The British plane continued to cruise to and fro. Suddenly a man came from the dugout beside the gunpit and handed a slip of paper to the officer. The monstrous piece galvanized into life. The seven gunners—three we had not seen before appeared like prairie dogs popping out of their holes—jumped to their work, the monster shell was hoisted and rammed home, the charge placed in the yawning breech, the huge block swung shut and screwed fast. The officer barked a word. Back upon its dirty haunches jerked the gun, with

an earth-shaking roar and a belch of flame that shot fifty feet up into the air from its elevated muzzle. As the barrel swung back into position, the man at the breech opened it deftly, and a second sheet of flaming gas and sparks licked out with a vicious, curling vehemence: the backfire. Through the air shrieked the shell—*swoosh-shshsh! swoosh-shshsh! swoosh-shshsh!* We tried to follow its flight with our binoculars. A dirty brownish-gray puff of smoke and an instant later a dull boom far away on the other side of Liévin rewarded us. Again and again the gun roared. The men moved swiftly and methodically, without haste, without excitement, but as steadily and rapidly as the perfectly functioning parts of a machine—until five o'clock. Then they knocked off target practise and had tea. Tea on the battle front! I suspect the British heaven includes tea—and jam.

Tea done, the howitzer began again, this time with corrected ranges, evidently, for only three or four shots were fired. The last one, instead of coming to our eyes and ears as a puff and a boom, came in a terrific concussion that shook even the Ridge where we were, and a blast of sound a thousand times heavier than any single shell could make. The nine-point-two must have landed a shell fairly on the ammunition dump beside the German gun, for silence fell again thick and soft. That same evening, only two hours after we had left the Ridge, one of our Captains at the Château came to me excitedly and said: "My word, old chap, they are simply shelling blazes out of Lens and

Liévin right now. Must have started almost as soon as you left."

I cried out in disgust. "We lay out there all the afternoon and saw a nice lot of blue sky and a little desultory firing, and now you tell me they are really busy!"

Captain —— looked his astonishment at such American sentiments; then he sobered. "It isn't quite as safe near that observation post now as it was then," he remarked, and turned the subject. I knew then that one of those gallant observers on the Ridge must have "gone west."

While we were still on the Ridge, a very raw young Canadian recruit hung about us like a friendly yet bashful child, asking questions and finally demanding of my courtier-Captain: "Say, would you mind letting me have your opera glasses a minute?"

To his eternal credit be it said that Captain X—— never batted an eyelash, but handed over his magnificent binoculars. Presently the Canadian unbosomed himself. In a few jerky sentences I would give a good deal to be able to reproduce, he told us how his only brother had been killed when the Canadians stormed the Ridge in April, how he had enlisted to avenge him, and how, actually on the scene, he was looking vainly for the exact spot where his brother had fallen. We left him, as we went down to our car, standing on the very summit of the Ridge, a clear target against the blue sky, still looking with timid, hungry eyes for the spot he would never find.

Vimy and Lorette Ridges tell their own story of the

furious battle that for months swayed back and forth to determine whether the Hun or the Allies were to hold the commanding ground of that section of northern France. They are seamed and criss-crossed from end to end with the deep, ragged furrows of the trenches, pocked with craters, and covered everywhere (in September) with battle débris the Salvage Corps had not yet cleaned up. One had to walk carefully—unexploded bombs and grenades are tricky things, and the slightest touch may set them off. Here and there the shell-fire had blown trenches and dug-outs out of all semblance to anything but refuse heaps. In one place I found a big mound with two German snipers' steel body-shields partly protruding from it, and some German hand-grenades held fast beneath the débris in such a way—considering the scraps of gray uniform I could discern—that I did not care to pull them out. The Ridge is trying enough to mount in dry and pleasant weather, when all one has to dodge are shell-holes and wreckage. What must it have been when the Canadians swarmed up its slippery clay sides in the rain, under a torrent of fire! I wondered, too, as I climbed those grim slopes, just where it was that young Clancy of Texas first took the Stars and Stripes into action on a European field.

Near the Ridges lie the almost indistinguishable ruins of the towns that once nestled under their shelter. Lorette in particular is a melancholy sight. The only structure that still looks as if man had built it is the stout old church; roofless, half its walls shot away, brooding over the

surrounding desolation with the pallid despair of a kindly spirit whose efforts failed. In its little cemetery graves have been disemboweled and their dead scattered; monuments of stone and iron blown to atoms or bent and twisted into grotesque caricatures of their original purpose; huge mounds reared and huge holes dug; and right in the middle of it all, a squat, solid little stone marks the spot where the Germans buried one of their comrades.

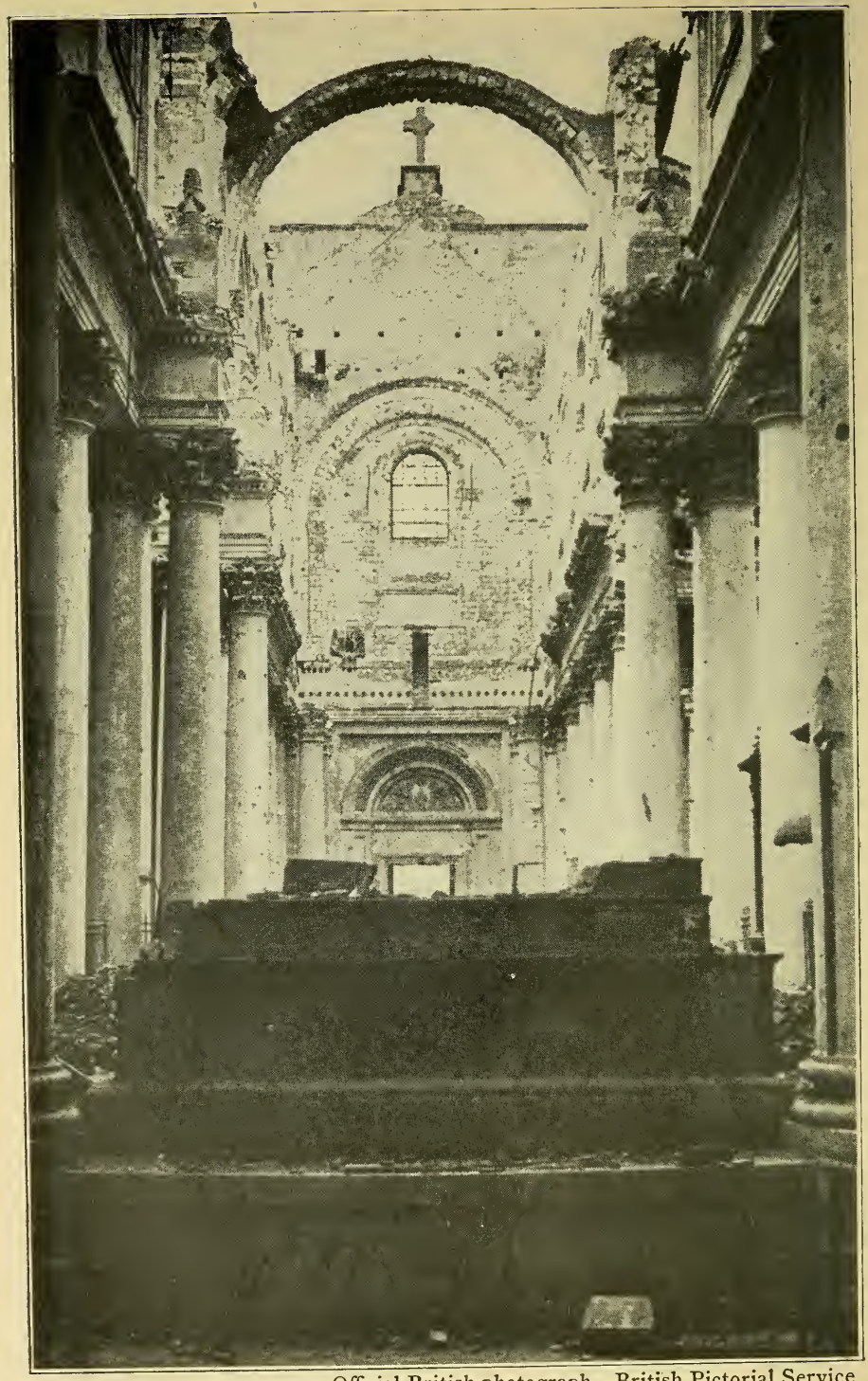
At Bapaume also the Hun had turned the burial ground into a rubbish heap, and here again he had buried his own dead. Over the common grave where scores of them were interred he had reared a heavy, typically Teutonic monument. It struck a savage note standing there, while all about the graves of the Allies were marked solely with low white wooden crosses.

The town of Bapaume itself is as shattered as one might expect after the terrific combats waged about it, but the most picturesque thing along the entire British front was, and I presume still is, if the winter winds have not destroyed it, at Albert. There the church had a very lofty, slender spire, with a gilded figure of the Virgin at its top. Cut almost in two by a shell, the tower swayed, broke, and fell half-way over, leaving the statue thrusting out at right angles from the rest of the steeple, its extended arm, once raised heavenward, now pointing straight at the German lines in mute denunciation of the outrage.

Arras is perhaps the most thoroughly destroyed of all the large French cities along the British lines. While the

Official British photograph—British Pictorial Service

His Majesty King George looking at a Tommy's grave on Vimy Ridge



Official British photograph—British Pictorial Service

Arras Cathedral, taken from the eastern altar. As found by British troops

Germans held it, the British guns tried to knock it to flinders; when the British first forced their way into it the Germans tried their best to make it too hot for their enemies. The result is the most utter chaos imaginable; but, unbelievable though it seem, in this instance the very chaos is superb, instinct with a melancholy grandeur that in a measure compensates for its frightfulness.

Some of the individual buildings leave memorable pictures: a house with every window blown in, and everything else blown out; an utterly gutted residence, roofless and floorless, with everything heaped in wild confusion in the cellar—and a shaving mug and brush still serenely standing on half a mantelpiece; a piano with its whole front blown into the backyard, its rusty strings filled with plaster and dust, its keyboard a convenient shelf for machine-gun ammunition by the hundred; a café sliced neatly in two, with its bar and bottles in the standing half—and nothing broken.

As we stood looking at the Cathedral one brilliant morning, and marveling at the unique change shell-fire had made —in this case transforming one of the ugliest Renaissance churches in France into a sublime and inspiring ecclesiastical ruin—we heard a noise behind us. One learns in the war zone to move quickly, to ascertain the meaning of any unusual sound on the instant. Across the street was what had been one of those tall, gangling, top-heavy French houses with each story pushing out above its fellows. The three upper ones had been battered into a tangle of beams

and slates and stone; hardly a square foot of the façade but was marked by shrapnel or machine-gun fire. The ground-floor shutters were making the noise, and as we turned toward them, they opened. A very pleasant, wrinkled, ancient head thrust out, and a very pleasant old cracked voice wished us a very good morning.

"Good morning to you, Madame," I responded, crossing the street to her, astonished to find a live creature in the midst of this desolation. "How long have you been in Arras?"

"*Soixante-douze ans, Monsieur,*" she replied with a brave smile. "Seventy-two years, sir."

"Ah, yes—I understand. But I mean: How long have you been here since the bombardment?"

"*Soixante-douze ans, Monsieur,*" she smiled again. "I have never left Arras; not even when—" She finished the sentence with another courageous smile and a shrug that told volumes.

It was unbelievable that any human creature could have endured the frightful storms which had raged from one border of Arras to the other for months. Shells had burst above her and shredded her house into matchwood; they had fallen in the street before her very door and blown up the sidewalk; they had howled and shrieked and bellowed and roared on every side. Men had fought with the fury of wild beasts all around her without harming a hair of her head, and now, when the titanic struggle was over, she was

still in the same place—existing no one could tell me how, and able to wish a cheery good morning to the strange visitors who came to look at her ruined Cathedral—one of the anomalies of a war in which the impossible has become the commonplace.

## CHAPTER VII

### FARTHER ALONG THE BRITISH FRONT—AND BEHIND IT

A SHORT sap, driven out toward Fritz—Fritz himself, invisible seventy-five feet away behind a tangle of barbed wire and a parapet of mingled earth and sandbags—a fresh-faced, pink-cheeked little English country lad, with a clear blue eye and a carelessly held rifle, peering steadily through his trench periscope—my Captain and I, stealing along sidewise through the narrow trench, like a couple of crabs.

"Morning," whispered the Captain—we were too close to the Hun to risk ordinary tones—as the blue eyes came away from the eyepiece of the periscope for a moment. "How's hunting?"

"Only one this morning, sir. 'ave a look?"

The little sniper backed away from his instrument. The Captain glanced through, and turned to me.

"Look through—he's out there near the Hun wire—little to the right."

My unaccustomed eye searched the grass and débris and wire for several moments before I located the dead German, lying in an ugly tangle of twisted limbs, his face turned up to the sun, his rifle lying across his body, his crude helmet standing bucket-like beside him. I had seen dead soldiers before, so the silent figure gave me no shock. He was very

peaceful and calm, with no further hair-raising patrols or raids to risk. But the executioner did shock me: he was so much the boy, so juvenile despite his practised eye and deadly finger, as he sat there at his periscope, calmly watching for the least sign of a movement that he might send a steel messenger to it. One could think of him as dancing gaily with a pretty girl of a summer evening, or being very respectful to his mother—and here he was at one of the most dangerous posts on the line, responsible for the safety of the men in his trench, the spokesman of Death.

After consulting the trench commander, my Captain said: "It's been pretty quiet here all morning. I guess you can risk a look over if you want to. But you must move your head slowly up, and right down again, without stopping an instant."

At that moment the two other Americans joined us, and we made our way to a little bay where there were no soldiers. I took my look last. It was not very satisfactory. All I could see was exactly what I had seen through the sniper's periscope, except on a much larger scale. There was the shell-torn ground between the two lines of trenches, the opposite tangles of barbed wire, the enemy's low parapet. I never have been quite able to understand what went wrong. Perhaps I stopped moving long enough to locate myself to a German grenadier; perhaps the keen eyes beyond that wire chanced to locate my position as I was raising my head. Whatever the fact, a vicious *crack!* tumbled me down into the bottom of the ditch, my helmet tinkling

with the splinters that glanced from it. Somebody had fired a rifle grenade at me, but I had luckily escaped without a scratch. My Captain looked annoyed.

Behind me, on the shelf of a dugout, lay a handful of neat little Mills bombs. I was angry at being made a target when I merely wished to peep, and so I reached for one.

"Let me send him a souvenir!" I begged.

"My word, no!" exclaimed the Captain hastily, stretching out a forbidding hand. "You might start something that would cost the lives of fifty men before we got through. You might be killed yourself before we could get away." And then he added, in perfectly good American, with a smile at his own humor, "Nothing doing!"

A Lieutenant in charge of a monstrous trench mortar in the sector tried to soothe my ruffled pride by taking me into his dugout to show me his "sty of flying pigs," and chuckled gleefully of "a pretty little strafe we're going to start at three o'clock. We've a clean hundred pigs for him, and the big uns behind are going to have a little practise, too."

His "pigs" were fat, monstrous shells with wings on their tails. The pot-bellied mortar that lobs them over in a graceful curve was a mournful-looking brute compared with the large howitzers and lean naval pieces or field guns. The "pigs," because of their wings, squeal horribly as they fly, and burst with a peculiarly loud and nerve-shattering detonation, declared by those who have lived through it to

be infinitely worse than the duller boom of a much heavier shell.

Before we left the trench, the music began, and it was sweet. Somewhere behind us to both right and left, a battery went into action, throwing eighteen-pound shrapnel into the very trenches we had just peeped at. The sharp report of the guns, the *whoooosh-woosh-woosh!* of the shells as they flew close above our heads, and the ugly *bang!* they made in front, were almost simultaneous. At first there was the irresistible inclination to duck at each one—which made the seasoned Tommies smile good naturedly. I wanted very much to stay for the real performance half an hour later, but my Captain was obdurate. When he thought I had seen enough, he hustled me away so fast that we were out of even ear-shot when the flying pigs began their eldritch squealing. That was at Croisille, in that fiercely fought region where the long battle of the Somme finally gave dear-bought victory to the Allies.

Never were there more mournful specters than I saw in one part of that bloody field—the tanks! Huge, weird, antediluvian monsters of rusty black, they lay motionless in the sticky clay not far from the highroad. Here one had received its death wound as it was crawling heavily from road to field, shivered and stood still on the edge. Its ugly black snout and ridiculous little rear steering-wheels somehow gave it the air, even in death and abandonment, of striving still to push on toward the vanished enemy. I clambered in through the roof—what a sight! Space

enough, and not one whit more than enough, for the seated crew, the machine gunners and their snarly pets, the engines, the ammunition, the tanks for "petrol" and oil. That mangled interior told a story clear as day: the exploding shell disabling the machinery; wounding or killing the heroic crew; igniting the gasoline, whose terrific heat exploded the thousands of rounds of cartridges, tearing their brass shells into fantastic, curly shapes, and spraying the whole interior with bullets. I have one of the bullets in my pocket now, dented on the nose, chipped on the side, scratched and scarred, its leaden core melted out.

Four other tanks rested at various angles within a half mile or so, one rearing up on its ungainly haunches, one thrusting its rusty jaws into the mud it seemed to bite in its death struggle, one half turned over on its side; all of them terrible, ludicrous, inspiring—monsters from some prehistoric age who had gallantly come to help their puny masters, and died nobly on the field of honor. No wonder the symbol of the Tank Corps is the fire-spitting dragon, creature of legend and mystery!

The Butte de Warlencourt stands out from the plain of the Somme Gibraltar-like, a huge mound of gray clay so covered with craters and "duds" (unexploded shells) and fragments of shells, so writhingly torn apart and mangled, that it looks like nothing so much as the pitted floor of the moon. As I panted up its steep sides—where the various regiments whose simple, impressive monuments

crown the summit, met glory's shining, deadly face with fearless vision—I wished a tank might be hauled to the very top and set between the stone shafts, that the gallant fellows who met a flaming death within their steel prison might have a temple the world could never forget. For the world will come here to the Butte after the war is done —"Cooking it" along the Somme field—and the tripperiest tourist of them all could not but pause in reverence before such a memorial and go home to spread further still the fame of the dragon-men and their translation in their chariots of fire.

Farther along, on the way to the great mine-crater of Pozières, there were plenty of antitheses for the clumsy tank, with its three-miles-an-hour speed, and its clanking, roaring noises—the dainty, swift, noiseless carrier pigeons which are also a vital part of the Army's equipment. Not only here, but all along the rearward lines of the Allied Armies, their big, wheeled pigeon-cotes, like gipsy wagons, and their attendants' weirdly *camouflés* tents dot the landscape, while the birds circle in airy flight overhead, or go soberly enough by messenger in light crates to the trenches, where they are released with dispatches for their particular headquarters.

Pozières crater is simply a huge, funnel-shaped hole in the ground, its white sides glistening in the sunshine. Nothing about it suggests even remotely war or any of war's activities. Yet to stand at the edge of this great crater and look across its perhaps three hundred feet of

mouth and sixty or seventy of depth, is to visualize, in a way, the entire war. For a year or more, patient human moles burrowed endlessly in the saps, and hewed from the chalk the great chambers where the explosives were stored. Then, the pressure of a button somewhere in the rear, and the year's work went roaring up skyward in one forty-thousandth of a second. Men, guns, horses, the key-position of that section of the German lines, were all destroyed blindly, irrevocably, by this mechanical device that worked without personality or human feeling.

The same thing transpired at Messines Ridge, where the huge mining operations that required almost eighteen months to complete, were made possible by the expert scientific knowledge of a quiet, modest, genial little old gentleman who never had an unkind thought in his life. I found him in a little two-by-four room at one of the headquarters far behind the lines, humped over a rough kitchen-style table littered with maps and many bottles of colored inks, preparing, no doubt, for a fresh blow in some other vital spot. In the five minutes he gave me we talked—or rather, he talked, and I listened somewhat uncomprehendingly—in pure geological terms of Tertiary underlays, Jurassic formations, alluvial clays and the like, which did not at all correspond to the France I know. But Major Blank's knowledge goes deep down into primitive chaos and brings up in clear, ordered statements those indispensable facts that underlie the emotionless efficiency of the British Army.

Efficiency also marks the C. L. C., or Chinese Labor Camp,

an enormous compound fenced off by barbed-wire stockades about ten feet high, laid out in wide, regular streets at right angles, and filled with barracks, storehouses, workshops, a hospital, headquarters office, finger-print bureau, and so on. Here are no less than forty-five thousand sturdy Chi Li and Shantung laborers who release an equal number of Tommies for military duty. The coolies are elaborately catalogued and graded according to their capabilities and past experience. An unskilled laborer receives a franc a day, plus an allotment of ten dollars Mexican silver (the current coinage in coastal China, where a deal of it is manufactured from raw silver by the enterprising Chinaman) to his family every month. Interpreters receive five francs a day, with a monthly allowance of sixty dollars "Mex" to their families. This pay is net to the workers, who also receive, to use the Army term, "subsistence"—better and much more plentiful than they ever had at home: ten ounces of meat—an unheard-of luxury for most Chinese—eight ounces rice, eight ounces bread, eight ounces fresh vegetables, bacon, salt, eight ounces flour, and cigarettes or tobacco. In case of accident resulting in partial disablement, a lump sum of one hundred and fifty dollars or less, depending upon the injury, is paid the family; in case of death or total disablement, this amount is three hundred dollars, "Mex." The working day is ten hours, and the general system much the same as that successfully used during the Boer War in South Africa.

So much has been written respecting the morals of the

Chinese in general, and of their addiction to narcotics in particular, that it is only just to state with emphasis that the morals of this coast camp in France are excellent. The worst charge the canny Scots laird in command could bring against them was that the Chinese are notoriously spendthrift! The French of the province have been very timid and offish toward these Mongolian strangers, and nervous mothers use them as bogies to frighten their children into obedience. John himself seems rather to enjoy his fearsome reputation, grins, minds his own business, and maintains good order and decency everywhere. British discipline no doubt has a mighty influence in this respect; so, no doubt, has the innate solidity of the Chinese character. Liberty outside the camp is carefully restricted, but plenty of entertainment is provided within bounds. The Y. M. C. A. huts—think of a Christian Association for Confucians!—are supplied with phonographs and moving pictures: the Celestials show a strong preference for the elemental humor of the custard pie hero of the half-mustache and uncouth feet.

None of the coolies have as yet been "lost," as the commanding officer put it neatly, from this French camp, though one morning when he was out on his horse he chanced to meet a small group who had simply walked out of the gang with which they were working and begun wandering about the lovely French countryside. The Colonel knew they had no business to be where they were, and reined in his charger.

"What are you doing out here?" he demanded.

One of the Chinese who could speak a little English jabbered a moment with his companions, and then turned back to the officer with a bland smile and a truly Gilbertian answer:

"Jus' pickin' a few buttehcups," he said, and docilely turned his fellows toward their work.

Only eleven of all the sixty thousand Chinese used in South Africa broke bounds for good. Long afterward the officer who now commands the C. L. C. in France, and who was then a junior in the South African camp, met some of them in the Congo, headed eastward, "walking home to China!"

One morning we were detailed to inspect a training camp. When we reached it, after a thirty-mile ride through the country, it was as empty and desolate as a deserted village. Only the commandant was on hand. "Awfully sorry you chaps had your ride for nothing," he apologized. "Interesting show, y' know. But at midnight I got orders to clean up, and by five this morning I had the whole ten thousand of my fellows out on the road. See anything of 'em coming down?"

Had we seen anything of them? For nearly two hours we had had to run carefully, through an unending stream of artillery, transport trains, men of every arm, from Highlanders wearing the dark Gordon plaid to lean, swart Bengalese cavalry who saluted smartly with down-flung hand as we passed. Infantry and artillery, engineers and

sappers, staff and horse were all going gaily forward—to what? They did not know at the moment. Neither did we, until some time afterward, when the "big push" that finally resulted in the storming and capture of Passchendaele Ridge was announced.

It was beautiful to watch, this efficient, ordered movement, "blind" to the last man, but perfectly confident and tremendously impressive. That had been my initial impression of the British—their orderly coherence and smooth movement. This same efficiency is everywhere—never more noticeable than in the work of those unthanked gleaners, the Salvage Corps, whose endless toil is absorbing to any one with an eye for detail. The Major commanding a great salvage and ordnance dépot at one of the Channel ports was so delighted in my interest that he spared me not a single particular of the system by which he was saving thousands of lives and millions of money for the Army. The Salvage Corps, by way of explanation, is a general picker-up and recoverer of everything dropped, lost, thrown away or shot down on the battle-field, or anywhere. Carefully it sorts the gathered-up débris, and puts everything possible into use again—at that, the fiercely-fought actions leave behind unnumbered tons of matériel that is never recovered.

In this particular dépot during a single month—the Major showed me his report—nearly eighty thousand mess-tins alone had been brought in, cleaned, put in perfect condition, boiled in potash, polished and stored for reissue. Camp-

kettles by the hundred, boilers for the field-kitchens, water-bottles and lanterns to an amazing total had been gathered up, put through the same process, even to the lanterns, and stored away in their bins. Nearly five thousand boxes of bandoliers represented the month's recovery of these indispensable cartridge-belts. As for the rag-pickers, they had repacked and weighed and stored almost three hundred and forty-eight tons of woolen rags alone, to say nothing of nineteen tons of waste paper weighed and baled and sent home. How did that amount of paper ever get to the front? The Major could not tell me.

The two most interesting things, to me, going on in the vast establishment both concerned footgear: boots and horseshoes. Here are the items, as they stood on the Major's record of the animal footwear—

New loose horseshoes received from the front, sorted and repacked for group, *pairs*.....8,600
Partly worn horseshoes sorted and issued, *pairs*.... 625
Unserviceable horseshoes dispatched to England, *tons* 497
Rusty horseshoe nails rumbled and made fit for use, *cwts*..... 28.5

Imagine! Nearly a ton and a half of rusty horseshoe nails recovered, some of them from the shoes stripped from dead horses, thrown into an endlessly turning barrel with a few bits of leather to polish them clean, and turned and turned and turned until they emerged as shiny and new as if they had never been near the front! And the four hundred and ninety-seven tons of useless shoes sent back to

England to be remade—think of the number of reshod horses that means!

The boots and shoes for humans were not less interesting. Tommy can not fight on sore feet. As soon as his soles or heels wear down badly, his boots are turned over to the Salvage Corps, which also picks up quantities of such equipment in the trenches and on the field. All are brought to the dépot, where two piles are made of them, those fit to repair and reissue and those condemned as useless. The shoe-shop where the repairing is done would warm the heart of an American manufacturer. It throbs and roars with an everlasting clatter and din of thumping hammers and flashing stitching-machines, box-making machines, all sorts of machines, many of which, I was informed, were American. The operators—about half as many women as men—never looked up. They banged away as if the life of the whole British Empire depended upon each individual's doing his level best every minute. The speed, the efficiency, the absence of lost motion in every way was a revelation.

The condemned boots and shoes disappeared so fast it took a little looking to see what became of them. At a table out of which rose a sharp vertical knife, a seated girl snatched up the shoes from the mountain beside her, slashed sole and upper apart, and threw each part to a different side. The soles quickly went into a vast mixing bin where, with the addition of just enough broken box-covers and other useless wood to start them burning, they

vanished into the furnace that provides power for the whole establishment. The Major did not quite understand when I complimented him on utilizing everything but the smell, and suggested that it really didn't matter! The uppers of the shoes, in the hands of another deft young woman before a curving knife came to life on Tommy's marching feet as neat, well-oiled shoestrings.

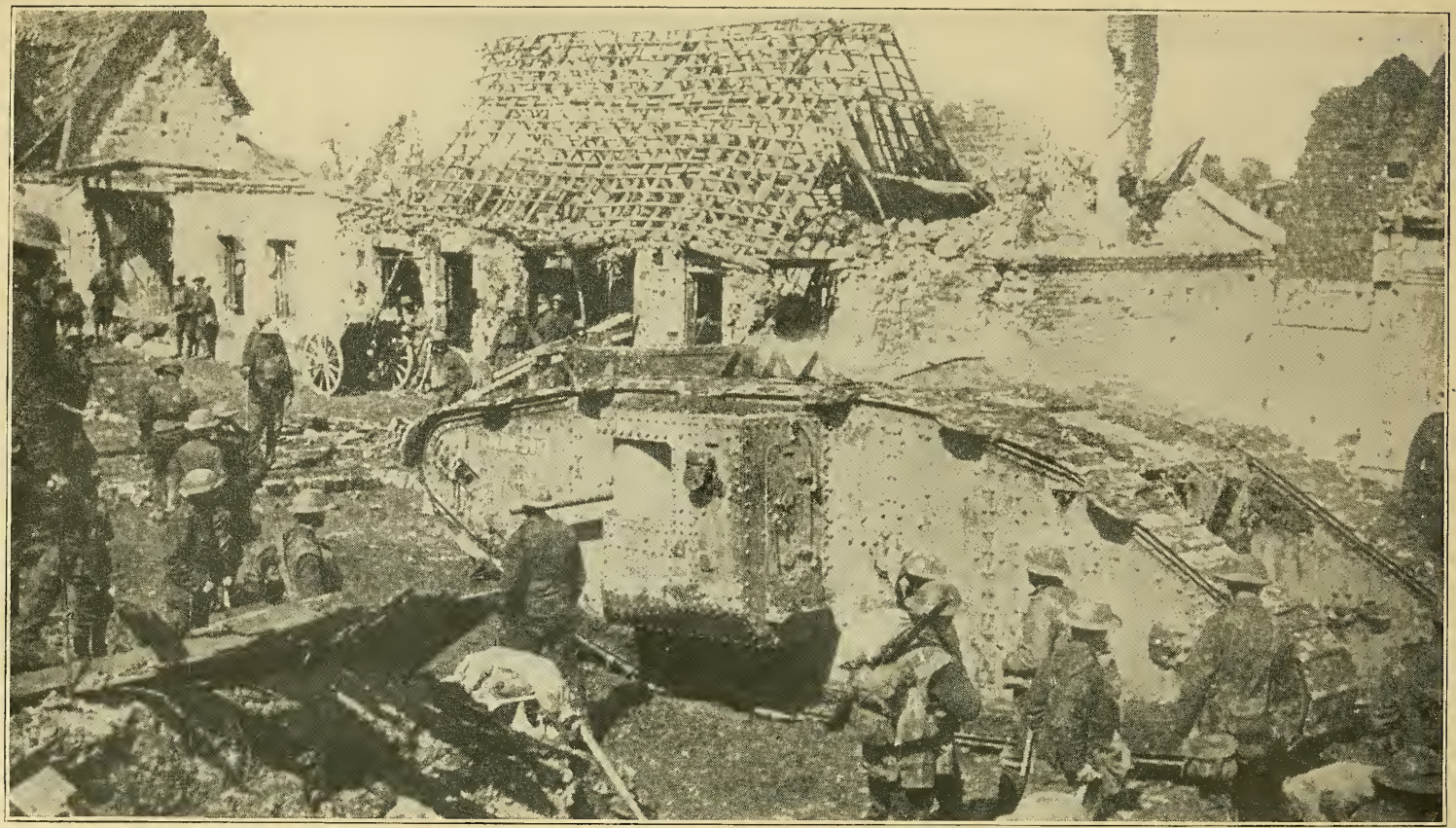
Besides these peaceful things, the Salvage Corps gathers shells and cartridges galore. In that one month it had collected, inspected and classified, in small arms ammunition alone, ten million rounds, picked up nearly two hundred thousand pounds of empty cartridge shells, and had ready for reissue almost four thousand "tin hats" which the Ordnance Department fondly designates as "shrapnel-proof" notwithstanding the vast numbers that come back—I have one myself—with the plain evidence that head-armor is not proof, whatever its name.

The colossal warehouses about the dépot compound make the vastest department store in the world, with everything an Army needs ready for instant issue. There are even a few feminine frills, for the female auxiliaries—like the nurses, the "Fanys" (First Aid Nursing Yeomanry), the plucky little "Waacs" (Woman's Auxiliary Army Corps), and the W. C. B.'s (the Women's Church Brigade), whose initials, annoyingly enough, do not lend themselves as a nickname—have to be supplied.

One of the most vital of these units is the "Waacs." Recruited almost entirely from the women of the wage-earn-

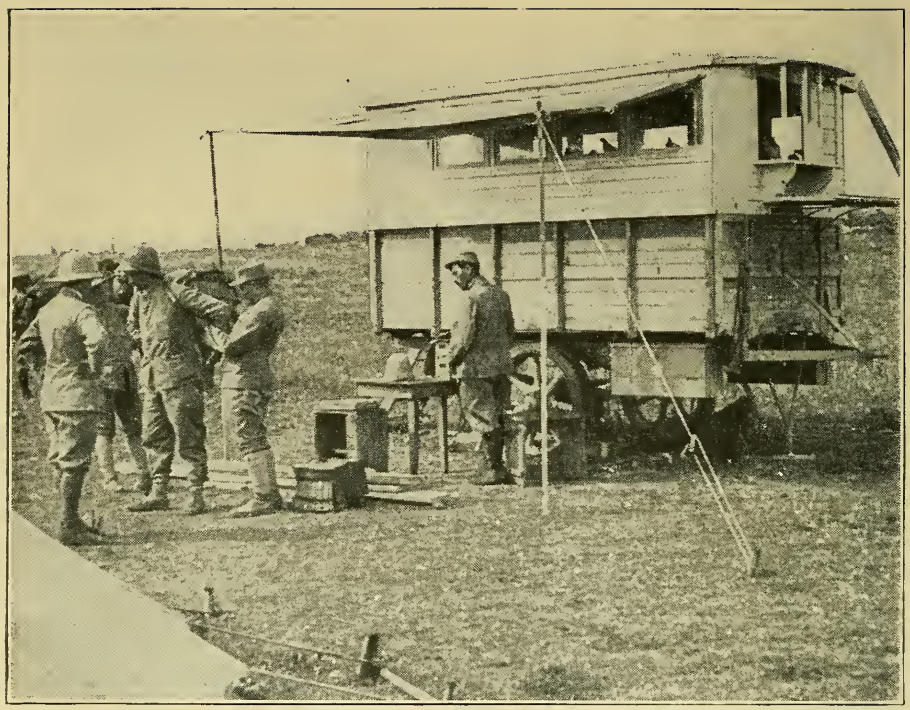
ing classes, this efficient body does much of the hard and dirty work—without which the domestic arrangements of the Army would suffer—such as scrubbing floors, cleaning house in hospitals and permanent camps, driving motors for special purposes, and so on. When they first appeared in France in their trim brown uniforms of short skirts and close-fitting jackets, cocky little hats of the same color, heavy brown woolen stockings and low shoes, the French unfortunately did not understand the reason for their existence and looked very much askance. The English Army keenly resented that cruel misunderstanding. To correct the impression as far as possible, orders were issued that no officer or civilian should speak to any "Waac" under any circumstances except on official business.

Not knowing this, I blundered into an *impasse* one afternoon at the door of a headquarters office. My Captain had to report, and left me standing by the curb, glad to stretch my legs while he was inside. A moment later a pretty little "Waac" came rushing out, and tried to crank a balky engine. She tugged and pulled and spun her motor, and it would not even gasp. I stepped over and asked if I could not crank it for her. A passing Frenchman stopped to watch and listen. The busy "Waac," her plump face flushed with her furious endeavor, gave me one terrific stab with her black eyes, said never a word, and with a jerk that nearly tore her in two, started her engine. Captain X—— emerged just in time to see the little comedy. As the



Official British photograph—British Pictorial Service

A tank going into action through our troops



Military pigeon house. Putting pigeon in basket with message

Aviation camp (Marne). Cartridge belt for gatling gun and type of a flying chaser

"Waac" rounded a corner on two wheels, he laughed—the only time I ever heard a genuine laugh come from his silent lips.

"I say, you know, you mustn't speak to 'em—it isn't done, you know," and he told me the story. The best part of it is, to the everlasting credit of the British Expeditionary Forces, it really "isn't done," and the blessed little "Waacs" are as jealous of their lonely pride as a man is of his D. S. O.

The "Fanys" are English ladies, many of them young and lovely as well as independent financially; charming, low-voiced, clear-eyed, courageous girls who drive like professionals and fear nothing. Not a few of them turned their own luxurious motors into ambulances, which they keep in trim day and night with their own competent hands. While we were having tea at their headquarters, a "Fany" came in, and refused prettily to shake our hands when her own bore clear evidence of having just been in the tool-box and greasepot. But she was so tired and thirsty she had to have her tea before "cleaning myself, if you don't mind!" The "Fanys'" work is largely in the coast towns behind the front, where they respond to emergency calls, relieving the hard-pressed Army Medical Corps of a great deal of necessary and often very trying and dangerous work. When we arrived at their hut an emissary of King Albert I of Belgium—a Count whose name I failed to catch—was conveying the personal thanks of His Majesty

to Mrs. Commanding Officer for the bravery and skill of her young ladies the night before, during an air raid which killed nearly a score of Belgian refugees.

A badly wounded man; special apparatus needed immediately for laboratory work to help bring him back from the shadows; two little empty cartridge shells, a bit of cast-off wire, a tomato can; some hasty ingenuity, a little cotton wicking, some alcohol—and within a few weeks the badly wounded man trudging cheerily back to the front, very little the worse for the shrapnel splinter on which he had almost "gone west."

How simple it sounds, that miniature Bunsen burner, when one tells of it afterward! But how vital it was to wounded Tommy in his agony that the doctor had inventive genius and quick wit, skilled hands and the ability to utilize apparently useless things. Again and again, in operating room and laboratory, in every branch of the hospital work, this cool, unhurried, self-sufficient British efficiency has made itself felt from the very beginning of the war. The particular invention referred to was shown me at a Canadian base hospital on the coast, where the clean salt air blows freely through every ward and puts life into the pale and wasted fellows on the endless rows of white cots.

The morning Captain X—— started me off with a laconic "see a hospital 's morning," I thought we were going to the first line. When we finally pulled up in a big compound, flanked with roomy buildings on all sides, I was disap-

pointed, for we were in the outskirts of a large city, and I knew that here was a base hospital only. But perhaps the War Office in London knew better than I that the first line hospitals I had asked to see would not be either so interesting or so intelligible to me, besides being fuller of suffering and less suited to description. There was nothing to do but make the best of it, so, by grace of special permission, I went through ward after ward and watched the work going on. And what a place it was for interesting and unusual detail! Here men have had faces rebuilt out of horrors, noses manufactured and grown to order, hopeless limbs saved and made good as new; and what hasn't been done to the long-suffering human insides—! The good doctors have kept a record that shows less than one-half of one per cent. of their surgical cases die; only .54 of 1% of all cases, or, 2.5% less than hospital mortality in civil life.

Besides the Canadians, who constitute practically all the cases regularly handled here, a short row of Portuguese, wounded in the sector to which this hospital belongs, showed swart but content among their fairer complexioned mates. They were little fellows mostly, hardly more than sturdy boys, but in their faces was a look never seen in the eyes of normal boys in time of peace. It is in every face, not only in this hospital, but wherever wounded men are gathered, whatever their nationality: a look of blank but utter content that has nothing of resignation about it, nothing of even eagerness to be well—simply content. It

is a look that at first hurts the beholder. What has robbed these men of their natural, human attitude toward recovery and life? Do they not wish to recover? Of course; but while they have the opportunity to lie perfectly still in a clean bed, free of all "cooties" and mud and damp; while they can have some one feed them regularly with far nicer things than the Army mess-tins ever disclose; while they have privileges unnumbered and no hard, dirty or dangerous work to do, they mean to enjoy it all to the limit. So they look somewhat as those blind from birth look: placid, content, neither hoping nor fearing, living for the blessed peace and fulness of the moment.

As we came back through the hospital laboratory, I paused a moment to watch the improviser of the miniature hot-flame burner experimenting with some blobs of color on pieces of glass. Without looking up, he nodded over his work and said dryly he hoped somebody would some day have brains enough to catch that particular germ, or whatever it was he was trying to isolate. It was his luncheon hour, but half the time he forgets to eat, and has to be dragged out of his steaming, smelly, multi-colored "lab," where efficiency is the one and only test, human life the only reward that counts.

And there in that room, I think, is the keynote of Britain's part in the war, there the reason for her success—the impulse to efficiency, the regard for humanity, the recognition of principle as the principal thing.

## CHAPTER VIII

### HEROIC BELGIUM

When Nature set strong mountain barriers between France and her eastern neighbors, she made one grievous mistake: she left a wide pathway around to the north—the Low Countries. But was it a mistake? It has been desperately hard on France, hard on the heroic little Low Countries; but it has been of inestimable value to the savages and barbarians to the east. It has given them entrance to civilization from time to time; and always, up to the present, they have become civilized when they came through and learned what civilization meant. To-day they have broken through again; the tumultuous raids of the past have been repeated in this twentieth century; it is the business not only of civilized Europe but of the United States also—*our business!*—to see that history repeats itself, that once more the barbarians become civilized—this time clear back to the fountainhead, so there will be no barbarians left to break through in the future.

All through the centuries—nineteen of them—fierce fighting raged throughout the Low Countries. Sometimes it was merely to force a passage through them to larger fields; often it was for possession of the pathway itself, for it has always been a rich and tempting bait to the spoiler.

A brave and gallant people have always inhabited this region—Cæsar found that out before he penned the often-quoted line in his Gallic War, *"horum omnium fortissimi sunt belgae*—of all these the bravest are the Belgians." With the Roman conquest, and subsequent civilization of the stalwart *belgæ,* strong fortresses were built along the Rhine border to protect the new Roman province of Gallia Belgica; but the forts merely delayed instead of prevented the barbarian incursions. Again and again was the region invaded, and by the end of the turbulent fifth century—a time when the world must have seemed to the civilization of the moment going all to smash in the same way it seemed to us of 1914 to be going—all that is now Belgium was in the lusty hands of the Franks.

In their turn they became civilized, Christianized, and fused with the Gallo-Romans; but the fighting to and fro, the bitter periods of foreign domination, the terrible domestic quarrels and general internecine warfare went right on. And never, until 1831, when the Great Powers made a solemn treaty, decreeing Belgium an independent, constitutional neutral State, obligated to defend its neutrality, had the brave little country a chance to develop its destiny in peace.

That treaty of 1831 was the famous "scrap of paper" which Germany, to her eternal infamy and anathema, tore up and repudiated in 1914, against the protests of Belgium herself, and of France and England, who also had signed it, and who are to-day defending it with their lives. In the

# PROCLAMATION

A l'avenir les localités situées près de l'endroit où a eu lieu la destruction des chemins de fer et lignes télégraphiques seront punies sans pitié (il n'importe qu'elles soient coupables ou non de ces actes.) Dans ce but des otages ont été pris dans toutes les localités situées près des chemins de fer qui sont menacés de pareilles attaques; et au premier attentat à la destruction des lignes de chemins de fer, de lignes télégraphiques ou lignes téléphoniques, ils seront immédiatement fusillés.

Bruxelles, le 5 Octobre 1914

*Le Gouverneur,*

**VON DER GOLTZ**

## PROCLAMATION

In the future the inhabitants of places situated near railways and telegraph lines which have been destroyed will be punished without mercy (whether they are guilty of this destruction or not). For this purpose, hostages have been taken in all places in the vicinity of railways in danger of similar attacks; and at the first attempt to destroy any railway, telegraph, or telephone line, they will be shot immediately.

The Governor,

Von Der Goltz.

Brussels, 5th October, 1914.

eighty-four years of peace that intervened between its signature and its rupture, Belgium made a record of industrial, agricultural and political progress that constitutes one of the most remarkable chapters of modern history.

It is a tiny country, physically, so little Uncle Sam could drop it into one waistcoat pocket and not know he had it! With an area of only 11,373 square miles—800 square miles smaller than our own State of Maryland—it had a population before the war of more than seven millions: the densest population, relatively, of any country in Europe. In that area, so congested, there existed a network of more than six thousand miles of highroads, all either paved or macadamized, as compared with less than two thousand in 1830; 1,360 miles of waterways, including both rivers and canals; 2,900 miles of railways, and steam and electric trams and narrow-gauge railways everywhere. We always think of Belgium as pre-eminently a manufacturing country, and she was, with imports and exports that more than trebled since 1870; but it must not be forgotten that it was also a farming country with a full third of its population engaged in agriculture upon six and a half million acres of the most intensively cultivated land imaginable. But while these frugal, industrious, wide-awake people were busy developing their resources and building up a wonderful structure of enterprise and commerce, Germany was gathering her vast resources against the time when, as Professor Albert Bushnell Hart so aptly put it, the Prussian Guards would go "gaily goose-stepping over Belgium!"

To-day all there is left of free Belgium is a narrow strip in the west. This unconquered section reaches from just below Nieuport to the French border, a strip about the size of Greater New York, containing only one real city, Furnes, and a few scattered hamlets, all more or less scarred by long-distance bombardment or by the bombs dropped on them in the continual air raids. The principal outstanding features of this plain of Flanders, with its slow, placid streams between endless bordering lines of poplars, its quaint, quiet villages cuddling under their full red tiles or thatch, and its charming country houses half hidden in gardens, are, or rather, were, church spires and windmills. What a part in the early fighting those sleepy-looking windmills played! For a year or more nobody had time to notice that whether there was a breeze or not, their gaunt and creaking arms moved every now and then—ten degrees right; *stop;* three degrees back; *stop;* twenty degrees right; and so on. And then they caught a spy—moving one—betraying Belgium in regular code. Overnight the mortality among windmill spies jumped one hundred per cent., and the great arms moved no more!

The Belgian Government is still quartered in France, and the rendezvous for all intending visitors to the front is a certain city in the British zone. At the Military Control established at the exit from the station, I was waiting in line, behind a long string of returning soldiers, townsfolk and peasants to have my papers examined, when a

hearty, husky, radiantly good-humored voice the other side of the wicket exclaimed: "Say, ain't you an American?"

I looked up quickly. Facing me were two Belgian officers, one a Major of the General Staff, the other a Surgeon-Captain. The Major was small, lean, nervous, deeply reddened of face by constant exposure to the wind and sun; the Captain a very mountain of a man, six feet and more tall, gray-eyed, big-mouthed, his sunburnt face wrinkled all over with the merry lines of optimism and good humor. He grasped the iron bars of the gateway in one of his huge hands—and the officials looked up in consternation as he unintentionally almost shook the structure to pieces. He made me think of a Saint Bernard that had "grown enough but not grown up." But his good humor was infectious. I laughed, the Major—to whom conducting all sorts of persons over the front was an ancient tale largely without savor—laughed; even the annoyed Control officials laughed. So did the soldiers and citizens as they let me slip through and shake hands with my new friends.

"Gee!" remarked the Captain, releasing the pulp that had been my perfectly good hand. "I sure am glad to see a real American again! I've only been away from Norway two years, but it seems like an age. You're goin' to have the time of your life up here if we can give it to you!"

*Norway!* And I had thought him a Belgian. Where and how had he learned Americanese, and slang? I asked him.

"Norway, *Mich.!*" retorted the Captain, abbreviating the

name of the State. "Some town, too, believe me! Been practising there for twenty years. I didn't want to come over—but, gee, what could I do? I'm a Belgian, all right, all right; but now—say, I'm two-thirds American, at least. Wish I hadn't come over and got into this dam' scrap. It's making me thin as the dickens!"

Major L—— and I smiled at each other, while the Captain prattled on cheerily, mixing his three languages with delightful inconsequence, sometimes beginning a sentence in English, ending in Flemish, and sandwiching in the official French for good measure. Outside waited a Staff motor. As we rolled along, the Major explained in his beautiful French that I was to be quartered in the maritime railway station hotel, so familiar to millions of passengers from France to England in other days.

"The *boches* come over every moonlight night and try to bomb the station and the docks and ships," he explained cheerfully, "but they haven't hit it yet, and it's really about the safest place you could be. If there is an *alerte,* a bell-boy will warn you, and you can go down into the cellar if you like."

I had promised myself some sensations at the front, and here was one miles behind it!

Throwing my window on the top floor wide open, I looked out on a vivid picture brought about by the war. Oh, those sporting English! In a shallow pond about a quarter of a mile long and from twenty-five to a hundred yards wide, a dozen of them were swimming and playing

like young seals, while two four-oared, two pair-oared and two single-scull gigs were paddling about. Overhead circled a Belgian hydroaeroplane. Suddenly, with a roaring hum, the *avion* swooped right down among them, frightening away the ducks feeding about the edges, but not the Englishmen. It flew fifty yards a foot or two above the water, and dropped gently in without a splash or ripple, turned easily, and stormed along in a shower of spray to its hangar, where waiting mechanics, in the water to their waists, seized and drew it inside. While this was going on, a combination of English, Canadian, Australian and Highland troops in full kit were plodding along the seaward edge of the pond on their way to the distant trenches, and French children were playing about on the levées between pond and road and the sea, whose dull roar was very soothing.

Meantime the moon came slowly up. It was nearly full, and the skies cloudless. Not a breath of air stirred as it climbed the heavens—an ideal night for a raid. About five hours later the raid came, the station was aimed at, and the bombs, as usual, went far astray, most of them landing in open fields and untenanted streets.

Under the guidance of the Major, who proved the most fascinating of *ciceroni,* I was hurled around melancholy Belgium—all there is left of it—slammed to and fro, hither and yon, in a motor whose merciless chauffeur scorned anything as speed that did not send the needle trembling up around seventy or eighty kilometers an hour.

Traffic was no obstacle. Trucks, guns, soldiers—he passed them all so close a knifeblade would have filled the gap between. Many a time in the dusk on our way back to my dangerous hostelry, a shower of tiny sparks flew up from the whirling of our steel-studded tires upon the macadamized road. And once, in inky darkness and drizzling rain, running without headlights at that eighty-kilometer pace, we covered a greasy, slippery stretch of new-made roadway by turning completely around and skidding over it sternforemost on to the macadam. The chauffeur swore softly, slowed for just long enough to regain control and turn around, and pelted off again without so much as giving a backward glance to see if the Major and I had not been flung out by the terrific swing. No cup-race could hold any terrors for that twenty-year-old soldier-driver, who three years before had been in one of the Belgian universities, and whose blond good looks and boyish manners completely belied his utter lack of nerves and his daredevil performances, day and night, with that car.

Seven o'clock the morning after my arrival saw us on the road, headed north, and never a more inspiriting picture unreeled itself than the one spread before us as we flew along that jammed and sweating main road beside the canal, of which mention has already been made in describing the rear of the British zone of operations. And presently we were in Gravelines—moated, massively fortified, medieval Gravelines—as picturesque a fortress of its sort as Carcassonne of the south is of its. Beyond lay the Bel-

gian border, with the road flying out ahead of us straight as a string for miles. The driver stepped on his accelerator, and we finished the forty-five kilometers from our starting point to Furnes, including all slow-downs for traffic in the numerous towns and villages and the semi-circular twist through Gravelines, in exactly forty minutes.

Furnes! How shall I describe that silent, motionless, emotionless ghost of a city? How conjure up the picture it made that brilliant September morning as our car halted, panting and dust-covered, in the main square, with the tall, high-gabled church on one side, Spanish House at one angle, the town hall near the church and all about lofty, step-gabled houses and shops with faces such as one sees mostly in dreams? Here was surely the abode of peace. In this market square only such a little time before the black-smocked men sat behind their stalls with black-frocked women wearing white caps and wooden shoes. Here a little later King Albert gathered one of his heroic regiments in hollow square while he decorated its colors with the insignia of heroism. And now there are shell-holes through the roof of the church and the elaborate carven porch of the town hall. Many a house is shattered within, and unsafe to explore. The citizens have most of them vanished, blown to every wind of heaven, and between the smooth-worn stones of the cobbled streets grass has begun to sprout right cheerily. Yet, still capable of living again as it has lived so many hundreds of years already, Furnes waits—simply waits.

But with so much to see, Major L—— gave me a scant opportunity to explore lovely old Furnes, and we sped on out into the open. The region utterly blasted and destroyed does not begin until the vicinity of Pervyse is reached. What a series of towns! Pervyse, Oude and Nieu Cappelle, Lampernisse, Caeskerke, Avecappelle, Oostkerke, Ramscappelle and their neighbors, almost nothing but stark ruin. The church at Loo, with its crucified Christ hurled from the wall full length into the broken stone that fills the nave; the one at Lampernisse, with only half a dozen of its inner arches still erect; the ghastly silhouette of Ramscappelle, ragged against the sky, and its railroad station, shot into a sieve, with a bullet-pierced locomotive half-buried in débris that for three years has been untouched; that school for little girls, with a shell-hole through the façade and a tumbled heap of plaster and wood-work over the deserted benches—and the chalk still lying on the dusty ledge of the big blackboard; the vast railroad yards at Adinkerke, reconstructed and humming with the business of war; all this and more came into that first day of vivid impressions and furious driving.

What a people these kindly Belgians are! They think nothing of driving a visitor at a deadly pace twenty miles for luncheon and forty for a bed day after day, no matter what the weather. Major L—— took me from the front all the way back to Dunquerque for luncheon, and afterward slammed me back to the front again so fast it took an hour for my breath to catch up with me when the car stopped

Mr. Riggs—second from the left—and Belgian soldiers just from the trenches

The Calvary at Crapeaumesonil

Official Belgian photograph

Inundated section of No Man's Land between Belgium and German trenches near Dixmude. The sentry is a Belgian

First line of defense before the village of Ramscappelle

and hid behind a ruined farmhouse. Along a very much battered road we tramped, coming at last to a spot where it simply vanished in a refuse heap. "Fighting here," the Major said. Around us the swampy-looking fields full of rank grass and weeds were pitted by shells, some of which had fallen only that morning, and dotted by the ruins of a few isolated farmhouses and outbuildings.

We struck out across a field, on a path between screens of ragged burlap *camouflage* and weird combinations of wattles and dried grass, twisting around hummocks and dodging shell-holes, until a very large and shattered stone farmhouse blocked the way. Major L—— stopped for a moment to speak with another officer, and I wandered on into a roofless bay of the house. A bayonet was thrust at my chest, and a surly-voiced sentry demanded something in Flemish. I backed away a few inches. The shining steel kept right after me; pressed a little harder against my coat, in fact. My reply in French failed to satisfy the sentry, who either could not or would not understand. Things looked squally for a moment. At the front they have a habit of dealing in summary fashion with men in civilian dress who do not instantly account for themselves—and the finger snuggled against that Mauser's delicate trigger looked very nervous to me!

In came Major L——. Without moving a muscle, the sentry demanded sharply of him the password, his business and papers. The Major replied curtly, ordered him off, and moved toward me. The loyal fellow did not budge. He

merely raised his voice. The Major produced his papers and again ordered the sentry to go back to his post. While the argument waxed warm, a young Lieutenant suddenly appeared, hailed the Major, whom he fortunately happened to know, vouched for him to the sentry, and released us.

It seemed a very strange proceeding until after a few words in Flemish between my Major and the Lieutenant, I was ceremoniously ushered up a perpendicular iron ladder bolted to the reinforced chimney, and found at the top, inside a yawning shell-hole, an artillery observation post. The fact that at any moment the Germans might send over a shell and blow the post into bits had no effect upon the observer's nerves, and he looked every inch the stolid Fleming. But when the moon made weird shadows and the ghosts of the Belgian and German dead gibbered above the marsh; when the rickety old house creaked and swayed, and unimaginable noises came from nowhere—"Ugh!" he exclaimed, *"mon Dieu, mais c'est lugubre, très, très lugubre!"*

Sitting down before the graduated scale upon which his powerful glasses were mounted, I looked straight into the *boche* lines in Dixmude, barely visible with the naked eye as a thin, grayish-brown shadow among the woods on the other side of the region the Belgians had flooded by cutting the sluices and dykes and letting the Yser run over it. But with the glass! There was the blasted wreck of the church, the gaunt house walls, the tortured trees in the streets and between town and river-bank. There were the Huns them-

selves, barely distinguishable figures in uniforms so nearly the color of the background they could be seen only when they moved, which they did freely. In the foreground the Yser and its overflow blotted out everything, concealing with its muddy waters the now well-washed bones of the thousands, Belgians, British and French, as well as their German adversaries, who had fallen in the desperate fighting that has raged all over the inundated region, where, if a man is wounded and drops into the numbing cold water and slimy, viscous clay, he has small chance of emerging alive. In fact, the medieval horrors of storming a city across its moat were nothing to fighting through a moat such as this, miles long and six hundred yards wide!

That night, as we dined in the railroad station restaurant, the *boche* came flying over again on his moonlight pranks, and aimed a bomb or two at us. One of them, alas, fell squarely upon a car full of Belgian *permissionaires* going gaily off to Paris for a ten-day visit. When the frightful crash was over, twenty-two of them lay dead, and thirty-seven others were desperately wounded. Not a man in the car escaped some injury, and twenty-eight of them died before morning.

We heard the *alerte* from the siren, the clamor of the barrage firing, then the wicked detonation of the bombs. Nobody stirred, and dinner proceeded without comment. But just before we were ready to leave, a white-faced messenger searched the dining-room, and came straight to our table.

"Captain!" he exclaimed, then lowered his voice and whispered an order.

Captain-Doctor B—— turned to me with an apologetic smile and tried to make light of what I knew was a serious call.

"Now, ain't that too bad! Some boob over in my shop's gone an' got the colic and he wants me—just when we were having such a splendid time!"

"*Camouflage,* Doc!" I smiled back at him. "Tell me the truth. Anybody hit?"

For a second he hesitated, his big hand crushing the edge of the table; then his hatred for the *boche* flared up in the most violently profane cry I ever heard.

"Yes! A whole car full—damn him! *Damn him!*"

He groped his way heavily out, brushing the diners aside as if they had been children, himself whimpering like a child:

"*Oh, mes pauvres enfants! Mes pauvres enfants!* Oh, my poor children! My poor children!"

## CHAPTER IX

### OF ALL THESE THE BRAVEST ARE THE BELGIANS

Major L—— took me to the scene next morning. The bomb had fallen on the car not a quarter of a mile from where we dined. Already the tracklayers had filled up the big hole, relaid the rails, burned the fragments of the destroyed car and put the other derailed ones back upon the track again. As our motor halted to give us a good look, our chauffeur suddenly shivered and crossed himself. My eyes followed his. The damage had been repaired. But the stone wall beside the track—!

Being slammed around the unsubmerged tenth of Belgium was all very well, but it was not securing me the audience with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, whose results I had rashly promised an American magazine. The interview had been requested through the usual channels, and all the necessary formalities observed. I knew we were not many miles from the little country town where the royal residence has been made for months. I knew also that no pomp or flummery characterized the establishment, so I spoke rather confidently to my Major about it.

He sighed. "Ah, our Queen! I am afraid you can't see

her to-day. She is a housewife as well as a Queen, now. To-day she is moving!"

The very impossibility of the excuse satisfied me momentarily. Later I caught Major L—— looking too conscious, and taxed him with evasion.

"Well," he replied, after a good deal of fencing, "the truth is, I'm sorry to say, she is not going to see you. You see, there are fifty correspondents who have made that request. If she granted you an audience, there would be forty-nine madmen who would make life too miserable for anybody in Belgium to endure! Perhaps you will be as lucky as another American—I've forgotten his name. He was refused an audience with the King, and the very same day met His Majesty accidentally in a hospital and talked with him for half an hour. Ten minutes is about the limit for such things officially. Maybe we shall meet the Queen. But she is terribly shy, our little Queen—I warn you!"

I kept my eyes very wide open after that, and pulled every political wire I knew of, in both Belgium and Paris, but without any other result than profusely courteous telegrams and letters regretting to state, and so on. Major L—— tried his best to make up to me for the disappointment. He showed me things not usually given to visitors to behold, things impossible to relate; finally he took me through a long, dangerous, winding *boyau* or communication trench, and then by boardwalk over terrifying marshes where shells still dropped, and by sighing willows that mourned their stricken country, to the fire trenches at the

# KAISER WILHELMS REDE

## AN SEIN OSTHEER

### im Dezember 1914

Seid Ihr eingedenk, dass Ihr das auserwæhlte Volk seid! Der Geist des Herrn ist auf mich niedergekommen, denn ich bin der Kaiser der Deutschen!

Ich bin das Werkzeug des Allerhœchsten!

Ich bin sein Schwert, sein Stellvertreter!

Unglück und Tod seien allen denen, die meinem Willen widerstehen!

Unglück und Tod seien denen, die an meine Mission nicht glauben! Unglück und Tod den Feiglingen!

Sie sollen umkommen, alle Feinde des deutschen Volkes!

Gott verlangt ihre Vernichtung, Gott, der Euch durch meinen Mund befiehlt, seinen Willen auszuführen!

WILHELM II.

## PROCLAMATION

### Of William II, to His Army of the East, December, 1914

Remember that you are the chosen people!

The spirit of the Lord is descended upon me because I am the Emperor of the Germans!

I am the instrument of the Almighty!

I am His sword, His representative!

Disaster and death to all those who resist my will!

Disaster and death to all those who do not believe in my mission! Disaster and death to cowards!

May all the enemies of the German people perish!

God orders their destruction and God commands you through my mouth to do His will.

WILLIAM II.

edge of the inundated section. In a few moments a concealed battery of 150's—six-inch guns—began to intone their daily litany. I felt as though Vesuvius had suddenly "let go" right under me. The roar and shriek of bombardment is terrific. But the unexpected discharge of a big gun behind an absolutely silent line, is nerve-racking. The shells went so far I could see no result of the Belgian strafing, and the enemy made no answer to the raucous challenge, fortunately for me—there seemed no hiding place for my indecent length behind the low defenses. There are few real trenches in this part of Belgium—the ground is too moist. Usually, as in this case, there are mounds of earth and sandbags, breast high, with dugouts and ingeniously-contrived shrapnel-proof shelters burrowed into them, the marshy ground or water reaching up to the men's very heels.

Here, the marshes behind, the inundation before, battered houses in the distance, ammunition dumps in dangerous proximity to both their batteries and the trenches themselves, all the sadness of Belgium seemed concentrated. The soldiers looked wooden and stolid, creatures who had lost everything, who had become inured to hopelessness, who had no joy in even the fierce exaltation of combat. They gave me, the stranger, one glance, and paid no further attention. Not even curiosity stirred in them until Major L—— remarked to a Sergeant that I was an American. Instantly the man became human. I asked him to tell me of his country, of what she has suffered, of whether America

has really done as much for Belgium as we at home like to think we have.

In broken French—he was a Fleming, and spoke French but indifferently—he painted a picture of the Belgian resistance, of the horrors of that desperate first year of fighting, when the men stood for weeks on end thigh-deep in ice-water and slime, until their feet were eaten alive by the little white worms they had no time or opportunity to clear away; of the desperation of that stand along the Yser, when they had six rounds of cartridges apiece for their rifles, and about four for the field guns; of the horrible attempts at bayonet work with Belgian bayonets less than half the length of the German, when only the guts (his word) of the Belgians carried them on at all; of the drowning out of the countryside, with farm and home vanishing in the dirty gray waters before their eyes; of the populace burned to death, shot, speared like eels, poisoned, whipped and beaten with every degree of savagery, deported in droves, coerced into slavery; of the hideous, systematic starving of the remnant of the Nation, with hollow-eyed babies clawing at their skeleton-like mothers' flat and empty breasts and wailing feebly for the food that was not there—or anywhere; of America's aid, with the one pitiful meal a day it made possible as the sole salvation of men, women and children; of the endless bread-and-soup lines winding down the streets in rain and storm, holding their tatters together with shivering, emaciated hands, while full-fed *boches* gibed at their pitiful condition—and took care always,

"yellow dogs" that they were—oh, the bitter, bitter, contempt in his face and voice!—to keep well clear of the hunger-maddened hands that would eagerly have torn them apart; of the American declaration of war at last, after nearly three years of aloofness.

I wish I could convey the cynical inflection of the Sergeant's voice as he told of his and his comrades' view of us as a new ally, and their belief—bred largely, no doubt, by the overt sneers of the Germans, which permeated the whole of Europe—that we were coming in nominally to fight, really to make a few more billions in some huge contracting scandal. And I wish I could picture his face—and the faces of the men, who by this time had crowded around—as he sketched in a few vivid sentences the slowly-dawning consciousness on the part of all Belgium, from King to peasant, that our colossal plans were actually in earnest! His cold blue Flemish eyes fired into steely sparks as he talked, blazed when I asked him what he and his companions thought of President Wilson.

"Six months ago," the Sergeant said, "we all spoke of him as *'L'Homme aux notes,'* and *'Le Pédagogue.'*" (The man that writes notes, and the Schoolmaster.) "To-day we know him. We were mistaken, *mon Dieu!* He is the savior of Europe; perhaps," his voice fell to a reverent note, "the savior of the world. He is the genius of the hour!"

Before the tribute of this simple Flemish soldier I stood mute. What we had done seemed so paltry, so meager, when a whole nation was starving at our very doors, and

civilization and Christianity were at stake. We had sent a few million dollars, a few shiploads of foodstuffs and clothes. But we had not stricken our armed hands into the hands extended across the sea. We had not even listened to the voice of ordinary common sense and begun to prepare, while there was time, for the struggle inevitable. Now, with what Lloyd George has so aptly described as our typical "volcanic energy," we were trying to make up for the opportunity the time-serving politicians had thrust aside. But we were late, oh, so late, that this praise and gratitude struck painfully deep, as much a ruthless indictment as it was praise.

To it all Major L—— listened gravely, nodding his approbation of the Sergeant's glowing words. Before we left him, leaning there against the parapet and caressing his worn rifle with skilled fingers, I said to him: "And now, *mon brave*—. The Belgians will still resist, will go on fighting?"

His lean fingers tightened on his weapon. "To-day we are happy," he said simply. "I am, my squad"—he waved about him at the listening infantrymen—"is, the whole Army is, our King is! When the last Belgian dies, we shall stop fighting."

Major L—— and I walked back over that lugubrious, creaky boardwalk beside the willow trees and the ammunition dumps in silence. "When the last Belgian dies!" The Sergeant's tone implied that he believed the last Belgian might die—but that the cause for which they fought would

be carried on and on, until the beaten Hun would cry for mercy.

It does not make any difference what England has done or may do; it does not make any difference what France has done or may do; or Italy, or the United States. The fact remains, whatever any one says about the Belgians—and there has been sharp criticism in many quarters, accusing them of slacking and ingratitude in foreign countries since the first terrible year—that Belgium, and Belgium alone, saved civilization by interposing a solid dam of her own living flesh and blood which held back the wave of German frightfulness until France and England could reach the field. And so long as one single Belgian man, or one Belgian woman, or even one mutilated Belgian child remains with a flickering spark of the Belgian spirit in him or her, Belgium is not dead, but alive and fighting still!

To write of the sufferings of the Belgians without passion is to be bloodless and devoid of humanity! Their full story can never be told in prose; and the poet to hymn the epic of Belgium is not yet born. What singer of to-day could tell the story of that German sentry in the prison in Dinant who calmly strangled a Belgian baby in its mother's arms, because its hungry wailing annoyed his gentle nerves, or of that wretched old man hanged by the neck just high enough to let him rest his weight first on one desperately stretched leg and then on the other, balancing thus for hours while his murderers laughed at his frantic efforts not to die? (Arlon, 1914.) What poet could tell

adequately of the pettiness of these monsters, who turned from butchery and violation to such trivialities as mixing a Belgian grocer's supplies of cloves and pepper with his flour, or filling his smoking tobacco with chunks of sweet butter? Who could sing the glory of the German medical congress that turned the most magnificent halls of the superb Palace of Justice in Brussels into vomitoriums and latrines? It would take a Homer himself to describe the burning of the church at Houtem-sous-Vilvorde on September 13, 1914, while a crack regimental band executed the most fetching German music close by, outdoing even Nero's fiddling.

There were cases, of course, where the destruction the Germans wrought was purely military in its reasons, and so not to be charged against them except as a result of their plan for world domination at whatever cost. But the destruction of those marvels of Louvain, the Hotel de Ville—more a gem of Flemish Gothic sculpture than of architecture, so covered was every foot of it with delicate carving—and the University with its priceless library, was cold-blooded savagery for which no reason existed.

Where can I stop the tragic story—where is the end? To quote an embittered Englishman who loves the Belgium he knew and fears for the lovely old cities like exquisite Bruges of the Belfry: "We know the Beast now and the nature of him. If he have his way, he will make an end of Bruges before he loose his claws. With his devilish chemistry of fire and explosion, he will utterly destroy all that

beautiful old history of ancient halls and noble houses, of bridges and towns and gates. . . . He has made his filthy lodging in the good old houses . . . and never were there such days in Bruges, even when the anger of the Emperors was hot against the citizens. . . . I think of what he has wrought in those French towns from which the sullen beast has been driven out, and I fear for the last peril."*

We shall need to fear, unless we tell the Hun in clear Anglo-Saxon that we will pay him in his own coin, city for city, when we win. We shall not need to destroy the romantic old German towns so famous in picture and story. But his Essens, his Potsdams, his gaudy, flaring, *nouveau riche* towns where all the sordid materialism of the creature puffs itself large; these, if burned and leveled flat, would hurt his pride and chastise his spirit.

One evening at dinner my Captain-Doctor told with relish of his latest experience with an air raider. As he was going home, a bomb burst in the street he had just turned out of, and the concussion threw him ten feet. He jumped up and ran toward his house. As he reached it, a bomb fell at the other end of his own block, and again he was knocked down. While he was struggling to get his key into the door, by this time quite ready to plunge into his cellar, a third bomb fell squarely in his back yard—and failed to explode.

*London, England, *Evening News*, October 6, 1917.

"Nex' morning," he laughed, in his queer, twisted English, "I went out in de back yard to look. Zat son of a gun of a bum, 'e was lyin' in a hole in ze pavement. I was so dam' glad 'e didn' go off, I didn' know w'at to do. You know w'at I did? I lean over him an' I make ze sign of ze Cross—*so!*" illustrating. "An' I say to 'im, 'You *can'* go off now, you son of a gun!' Zen I curse de *boche* zat drop it, like *zis!*" and he gave a fluent anathema in Flemish which seemed comprehensive and soul-satisfying for even a man who had had such a narrow escape.

His experience was only one of many illustrations of the uselessness of the aeroplane in war, except when employed as a scout, photograph, artillery-spotting, or general reconnaissance machine. To be effective for frightfulness, it would have to be used in such large fleets that the very number of the machines would render the attack vulnerable to the anti-aircraft guns; singly, it is negligible and tremendously costly. That it is the most spectacular and thrilling single feature of modern warfare no one who has seen an air fight can deny.

One such fight I saw, a mad, impossible, swirling tumble in the clouds between an Ally machine, one of the latest types, a veritable hornet of the air, and four large *boche* planes, with British, Belgian and German anti-aircraft guns all taking pot-shots at intervals. Around the flyers burst the shrapnel in puffy white and gray clouds, the wicked purr of their own machine-guns playing an insolent obbligato to the bigger guns' throaty music. One, two,

three of the Germans dropped plummet-like, or fluttered down like twisted leaves. And presently the Ally and the surviving *boche* spiraled almost straight up at frightful speed and angles, dueling to the death. We did not see what happened above the cloud of vapor into which they disappeared at perhaps a mile and a half. Both guns still spat steel and fire. And then one gun stopped. Only the slower *put-put-put!* of the German went on, stopped, spat again, and stopped for good. Down through the dank cloud came the Ally machine, tumbling over and over, with bent wings and no guiding hand. The German battery opposite took a final and successful round at it, and it dropped like a stone inside their lines. Was it Captain Guynemer we had seen fall? He was shot down that day near that spot, in a similar fight. . . .

Near Furnes, close enough to the front lines even yet to catch an occasional shell, stands the hut and social service station known as the Canal Boat Mission, over which presides a Canadian lady who regards the flying *boche* with scant respect, though she has suffered more than once from his attentions. For three years Mrs. Inness-Taylor has somehow managed to keep the Mission stocked with American and British foods, groceries, canned things of all sorts, soap, clothing, books, everything imaginable that a people in distress could need. With her own war-roughened hands she has dressed the wounds and sores of more than two thousand Belgians—and lost part of a finger through infection; with her own hands she helped to feed during two

school years the six hundred children who dared to attend school in the low, carefully *camouflés* buildings across the road from her hut. With her own hands she answered the plea of a refugee who came up while we were talking, and begged for a shirt. I asked her if she were not worn out; if she would not welcome the opportunity to go home for a rest. Her Spartan reply shamed me.

"Go home? While there are more Belgians to be helped? Oh!"

She did not talk well—of herself. Only by cautious questioning, with Major L—— prompting her at every halting sentence, did I learn of her long service and of the horrors she had gone through. Not long before, when talking with her assistant, a Scotch lady, in the very door where we now stood, a German aviator dropped a bomb one of whose flying shards slashed her companion in two, and deluged Mrs. Inness-Taylor herself with the warm blood. Still with the Major prompting, I learned of her tiny dugout in the back yard, only a step from her door, and persuaded her to show me that inadequate shelter.

"It is all right for shrapnel," she said without a quaver in her strong, womanly voice, "but I imagine if I am ever down here when a shell falls, I shall certainly 'go west.'"

As I came away, she showed me her store of condensed milk, and told with tears in her voice of the gratitude of the aged men and women and the babies it was keeping alive.

"When you go back," she pleaded, "do tell America that

Her Majesty the Queen of the Belgians

Mrs. Inness-Taylor

we want more milk all the time. It is all that is keeping many of these poor children and old people, too feeble to work, and too poor to get away, from dying of actual starvation. American milk is the best we have, you have only to ship it to the Belgian Canal Boat Mission, in care of the British Admiralty in London, and we shall get every precious drop."

Mrs. Inness-Taylor is not the only woman doing noble, heroic, self-sacrificing duty on that dreary Belgian front. Queen Elizabeth of the Belgians is doing a wonderful work in her field—all the more wonderful when one considers her German nativity. Born a Bavarian Princess, she has had to endure not only the horrors that the others have witnessed, but the further horror, spared to the Belgian and French and English women, of knowing that it is her own blood kin, which has crucified, is still crucifying the people of whom she is the official head and mother.

And how magnificently she has served Belgium throughout its black hours! No Queen before in the history of mankind has so fully measured up to the loftiest ideals of womanhood: heartening her royal husband; cheering the men in the trenches; succoring the sick and starved, the wounded and dying. And when, in those memorable days of 1914, that pitiful stream of refugee children was driven like spray before the German wave, some of them orphaned, some of them hysterical with the horror of what they had witnessed, some of them mutilated, and all of them frightened, hungry and hopeless, more like a pack of starved

wolf cubs than like human children, the great Queen opened wide her mother's heart and took them into it. She fed their empty stomachs; she nursed their neglected wounds; she soothed and healed the broken, trembling hearts, to the last dirty, shivering, homeless urchin of them all.

To-day Elizabeth of Belgium wears no royal crown. She wears a more precious diadem, the blazing Red Cross of mercy; wears it royally, wears it with all the glory and modesty of majestic womanhood, worthy as any Belgian born of Cæsar's *"horum omnium fortissi sunt belgae!"*

## CHAPTER X

### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE GERMAN ATROCITIES

When the first reports of German atrocities committed in Belgium and France reached the United States they were discredited as soon as heard. No civilized human being could believe that other humans professing the same general scheme of civilization could possibly be guilty of crimes at once so revolting and so apparently useless. But evidence kept piling up. Fresh allegations appeared every day in the press. The testimony of reputable eye-witnesses gave solidity to the reportorial accounts. And presently the Governments of Belgium, France and England issued official statements of sworn evidence. At last, we had to believe—did believe, unless possessed of a consciousness either ignorant, undeveloped, or wilfully blind.

To such specimens it can only be said that everything they have read in their newspapers as to the atrocities committed upon wounded soldiers and sailors, upon civilians of both sexes and all ages—even upon the babies!—are only a tithe of the truth. The whole truth is too sickening, too absolutely revolting, to be told.

Yet even when most of us did believe, the hideous thing was utterly beyond our comprehension. What did it mean? What was the psychology back of it? How was it humanly

possible that the people who produced a Luther and a Reformation; who gave to the world a Mozart, a Beethoven, a Kant; a people who have long been known as a home-loving, affectionate, sensible and industrious folk—how could this people possibly disembowel babies and crucify women who had previously been raped into raving insanity.* Such a people could not. But the Germany of Luther, of the Reformation, of the kindlier spirits, is dead. The soul has been ironed out of it by the neo-Nietzschian philosophy of Prussian militarism. One need only turn with eyes opened and intellect sharpened by the war, to the history, literary as well as political, of the German people, to understand. The list of German thinkers and writers who have preached discord, inhumanity, treachery, brutality, frightfulness, hatred, world-domination at whatever cost, includes some surprising names.

Frederick the Great made an excellent beginning with his arrogant epigram, "Never form alliances except to breed hatred." His contemptuous reference to the Maréchal de Soubise—"He has twenty cooks and not one spy. I have twenty spies and not one cook"—was as scathing a self-indictment as it was bitter a jest.

The moderns have followed that eighteenth-century cue so closely they have overrun it. The long roll may be headed by the mad philosopher Nietzsche, the historian von Treitschke, the military critic von Bernhardi, and

*Proofs of this statement, both verbal and documentary, are at the disposal of serious investigators.

their like, exponents who carried their propaganda of ruthlessness to the *Nth* degree with an effrontery as unblushing as their premises were false and their arguments impossible. Line by line, their own utterances convict them: Nietzsche, for example, in *Beyond Good and Evil,* when he says: "We hold that hardness, violence, slavery, danger in the street and in the heart, secrecy, stoicism, arts of temptation and deviltry of all kinds; that everything evil, terrible, tyrannical, wild-beastlike, and serpentlike in man contributes to the elevation of the species just as much as its opposite—and in saying this, we do not even say enough."

Von Treitschke says the Germans let primitive tribes "decide whether they should be put to the sword, or thoroughly Germanized. Cruel as these processes of transformation may be, they are a blessing to humanity. It makes for health that the nobler race should absorb the inferior stock." General von Bernhardi lamented the humanity of Europe in the ominous statement: "There is a tendency, as vain as it is erroneous, to wish to neglect the brutal element in war," while General von Hartmann insists that modern war demands "far more brutality, far more violence, than was formerly the case," and in another place declares "the term 'civilized warfare' . . . seems hardly intelligible . . . it carries in itself a plain contradiction."

The utterances of the poets and musicians, lovers of beauty and nominally apostles of learning and culture,

## PROCLAMATION

The Tribunal of the Imperial German Council of War, sitting in Brussels, has pronounced the following sentences:

Condemned to Death for conspiring together to commit Treason:—

Edith Cavell, Teacher, of Brussels.
Philippe Bancq, Architect, of Brussels.
Jeanne de Belleville, of Montignies.
Louise Thuiliez, Professor at Lille.
Louis Severin, Chemist, of Brussels.
Albert Libiez, Lawyer, of Mons.

For the same offence the following have been condemned to 15 years' hard labour:—

Hermann Capiau, Engineer, of Wasmes.
Ada Bodart, of Brussels.
Georges Derveau, Chemist, of Pâturages.
Marv de Croy, of Bellignies.

At the same sitting, the War Council condemned 17 others charged with treason against the Imperial Armies to sentences of penal servitude and imprisonment varying from two to eight years.

The sentences passed on Bancq and Edith Cavell have already been fully executed.

The Governor-General of Brussels brings these facts to the knowledge of the Public that they may serve as a warning.

The Governor of the City,
GENERAL VON BISSING.

Brussels, 12th October, 1915.

# PROCLAMATION

**Le Tribunal du Conseil de Guerre Impérial Allemand siègant à Bruxelles a prononcé les condamnations suivantes :**

Sont condamnés à mort pour trahison en bande organisée :

**Edith CAVELL, Institutrice à Bruxelles.**

**Philippe BANCQ, Architecte à Bruxelles.**

**Jeanne de BELLEVILLE, de Montignies.**

**Louise THUILIEZ, Professeur à Lille.**

**Louis SEVERIN, Pharmacien à Bruxelles.**

**Albert LIBIEZ, Avocat à Mons.**

Hermann CAPIAU, Ingénieur a Wasmes. - Ada BODART, à Bruxelles. - Georges DERVEAU, Pharmacien à Pâturages. - Mary de CROY, à Bellignies.

Dans sa même seance, le Conseil de Guerre a prononcé contre dix-sept autres accusés de trahison envers les Armees Imperiales, des condamnations de travaux forcés et de prison variant entre deux ans et huit ans.

En ce qui concerne BANCQ et Edith CAVELL, le jugement a déjà reçu pleine exécution.

Le General Gouverneur de Bruxelles porte ces faits à la connaissance du public pour qu'ils servent d'avertissement.

Bruxelles le 12 Octobre 1915

Le Gouverneur de la Ville,

Général VON BISSING

prove that these men, while not so bloodthirsty as their less artistic brethren, were quite as fully impregnated with the national self-sufficiency and self-consciousness, and lusted after world domination. Yes, the soul has been ironed out of the old Germany. The Germany of to-day is a huge mechanical abortion, neither so perfect that it can not be destroyed, nor so imperfect that we can permit it to go on being perfected, and thus eventually becoming powerful enough to fulfil its proclaimed destiny of overpowering the whole world.

Incredible though it be, the Germans themselves do not deny the atrocities; rather, they glory in them. General von Disfurth says: "We do not have to justify ourselves. Whatever our soldiers do to hurt the enemy, we accept in advance." Omitting the most hideous and nauseating infractions of the generally accepted modern code of warfare, consider this list—

The shooting, by squads of riflemen and by machine-guns, singly and en masse, of civilians and soldiers, without regard to age, sex, occupation or momentary activities; butchery, by order, of wounded on the field of battle; rape, with little children sometimes among the victims; mutilations, of women, children, civilian males, prisoners of war, the wounded, and, most despicable of all, the dead; the use of non-combatants as a screen for German troops in action; the deportation of whole populations; enforced labor under fire; the importation of prostitutes into France and Belgium to act as spies; the systematized official introduction

of "white slavery"—the victims being Belgian and French women—in the Ardennes, for "the pleasure and benefit of the Imperial German troops"; the poisoning of wells; the distribution of poisoned candy, food, medical and surgical supplies; the dissemination of poisoned propaganda balloons; the defilement of houses, palaces, public buildings, religious institutions and churches; looting by official warrant, often under official supervision; the unnecessary destruction of the Ardennes and other forests; the blowing up of roads, river and canal banks and waterworks; the annihilation of entire towns; the cutting down or ruining of fruit and shade trees, vines, shrubs, etc.

While the Great General Staff accepted all this "in advance," the German people accepted it quite as cheerfully afterward, as innumerable German newspapers,* books and pamphlets published since the beginning of the war show. The one which touches us most intimately is a pamphlet by Pastor D. Baumgarten, of Berlin, in which he says, in the course of an amazing discourse upon the Sermon on the Mount: "Whoever can not prevail upon himself to approve from the bottom of his heart the sinking of the Lusitania—whoever can not conquer his sense of the gigantic cruelty to unnumbered perfectly innocent victims . . . and give himself up to honest delight at this victorious exploit of German defensive power—him we judge to be no true German."

*I have photographic copies of such newspapers, giving detailed accounts of some of the crimes indicated.

It is only fair to state that, at the beginning of the war, some of the German soldiers were not able to look on or take part in the frightful excesses without feeling the dumb stirrings of that human conscience which all the biological arguments of militaristic Germany had not been able entirely to stifle. Consider some soldiers' diaries on this score:

Gefreiter Paul Spielmann, I Kompanie, Ersatz-Bataillon, I Garde-Infanterie-Brigade, wrote of a night-alarm on September 1, 1914, near Blamont: *"Die Einwohner sind geflüchtet im Dorf. Da sa es gräulich aus. Das Blut glebt an alle Baute, und was man für Gesichter, grässlich sa alles aus. Es wurde sofort sämtliche Tote, die Zahl 60, sofort beerdigt. Fiele alte Frauen, Väter, und eine Frau, welche in Entbindung stand, grauenhaft alles manzusehen,"* etc. "The inhabitants fled through the town. It was horrible. Blood was plastered on all the houses, and as for the faces of the dead, they were hideous. They were buried all at once, some sixty of them, including many old women and fathers, and one woman about to be delivered."

This first-class soldier had not reached that altitude of Teutonism of which Dr. Gefrorrer speaks in the line: "Frenchmen or Slavs are accessible to moments of pity; the German never or rarely." But the war was young in 1914, and doubtless Gefreiter Paul progressed to the entire satisfaction of the General Staff.

One other weakling, Private Hassemer, of the VIIIth Corps, entered in his diary:

"3.9.14. Sommepy, Marne. A frightful bloodbath. Village burnt to the ground, the French thrown into the burning houses. Civilians and all burnt up together," or, in the original German text: *"Ein schreckliches Blutbad, Dorf abgebrannt, die Franzosen in die brennenden Häuser geworfen, Zivilpersonen alles mitverbrandt."*

An unsigned diary of an officer of the 178th Saxons regrets some of the wild butcheries in the Belgian Ardennes in late August and September, but a little later a change comes over the rapidly hardening soul of this gallant soldier, and he notes without comment that "a scout from Marburg, having placed three women one behind the other, brought them all down with one shot."

Economical scout! Did he receive the Iron Cross for this saving of ammunition?

Considering the fact as established, we are now most interested in knowing exactly why such crimes were, are still (on or about December twenty-fifth—*mark the date!*—an American soldier was found by his comrades after the Germans had retreated, with his throat cut), and will go on being committed. What is the psychology behind the actual deeds themselves? Do the Germans commit their atrocities as a result of the mob spirit which we Americans understand only too well; in the mad heat of battle; when inflamed by either alcohol or resistance? Or do they commit them because of individual degeneracy? No doubt, in so vast a body as the German Army, all the causes suggested at one time or another, developed atrocities. That is unfortu-

nately true in every army in war times, our own included. With the German Army, however, very little is fortuitous. The appalling fact is that by far the larger and often the most cruel atrocities in Belgium and France were committed under direct orders.

An order of Major-General Stenger to the men of the LVIIIth Brigade, composed of the 112th and 142d Infantry Regiments, at Thiaville, Meurthe-et-Moselle, on the afternoon of August 26, 1914, reads: *"Von heute abwerden keine Gefangene mehr gemacht. Sämtliche Gefangene werden niedergemacht. Verwundete ob mit Waffen oder Wehrlos niedergemacht. Gefangene auch in grösseren 6 geschlossenen Formationen werden niedergemacht. Es bleibe kein Feind lebend hinter uns."* In English: "After to-day no more prisoners are to be taken. All prisoners are to be killed. The wounded, with or without arms, are to be killed. Prisoners even in convoys of six or more, are to be killed. No living enemy shall be left behind us."

Private Moritz Grosse, 177th Infantry, at Dinant, scribbled in his diary: "Throwing of bombs into the houses. In the evening, military chorale, *Nun danket alle Gott* (Now all thank God)." Private Paul Glöde, of the 9th Battalion, Pioneers, IXth Corps, ends one page of his diary with the line: *"Verstümmelungen der Verwundeten sind an Tagesordnung*—Mutilation of the wounded is the order of the day."

Only degenerates could issue such orders; only degenerates could carry out such orders, not only in the letter, but

in the spirit as well. The natural and obvious objection, that a whole nation of degenerates is a moral impossibility, is easily controverted.

For more than a century the ruling classes of Germany have been mesmerizing themselves with the belief which Fichte voiced so clearly when he said: "Germans . . . it is you who, of all the modern nations, have received in quantity the germs of human perfection; and it is to you that the premier rôle has been given in its development. If you succumb, humanity will perish with you." The first step in carrying out that "premier rôle in its development" was taken by Frederick the Great in 1763, when Fichte was only a year old. The Emperor, finding his peasants too stupid to make soldiers, decreed education, of a sort, and just enough, to fit them for military training.

Thenceforward the educational system developed, now under the spur of a Fichte's philosophic imagination, now given new fire by a poet's dream that "the whole world must be German" (Heinrich Heine), until it resolved itself into an almost military system apart from soldier. Obedience, respect for authority and the word issued by authority, patient, industrious thoroughness, and a practical denial of the individual's right to originality, made it very largely a repressive system, whose result has been that the masses never lose their subservience to any superior. This lack of right to originality may be denied fiercely, since we Americans have always had a mistaken idea of German education. We supposed naturally that because scientific

specialization and encouragement of a free spirit of research in technical and scientific work characterized the German universities, the same thing applied throughout the whole educational system. It does not. The lower schools start the youngster right—right, that is, according to the German notion—and when he moves on to the higher grades (comparatively few do), he grows naturally in the rut where he was started.

It is a system which has proved, in the hands of unscrupulous authority, a philosopher's stone of sorts. By using it adroitly, it has been possible to transmute human beings into the mechanical parts of an Army, which in its turn is merely the physical manifestation of the German metaphysics. These mechanical creatures or new beings, when not actually in military service, look, talk, behave generally like human beings; and so they deceived the world. But they are not human. They are the veritable "blond beast" of Nietzsche, "rejoicing monsters, who perhaps go on their way, after a hideous sequence of murder, conflagration, violation, torture, with as much gaiety and equanimity as if they had merely taken part in some student gambols." Love, sympathy, mercy, the power of individual thought and reason, are foreign to them. The natural, or rather, the primitive, instincts govern them. Their inhibitory centers are so blunted and dulled by the schooling they have had that ordinary conventions no longer apply to them in even so small a thing as courtesy.

A very important, if not a vital part of this newer Ger-

man philosophy, is the doctrine, based on biology by many of the foremost of Germany's intellectuals, that the essence of life is conflict. The Darwinian idea, developed to suit the greedy ambitions of Germany, and warped without regard to modern conditions, is the basis of the new theses. Briefly, these ideas are that natural law must inevitably work out in the survival of the fittest among twentieth-century humanity, as it has always done among the brutes. By this ruthless means only the best of humanity is permitted to endure, and this evolution assures the salvation of society. Germany, according to this ingenious argument, takes the place, for mankind, of the rigors of winter and summer, lack of food and water, powerful enemies and sickness that certainly, to a greater or less degree, weed out the weaklings from among the birds and animals.

The German philosophy considers the German mind, the German body, the German system of life and of government, so far the best in existence that there is no competitor; hence it must necessarily overcome all others and rule, harshly, until mankind realizes its benefits and yields to it. With characteristic modesty, the Germans endorse fully Professor von Seyden's declaration that "the Germans are the chosen people of the world. Their destiny is to govern the world and to direct the other nations for the good of humanity," and the similar utterances of Maximilian Harden, the editor of *Die Zukunft,* who wrote in September, 1901, that it is "clearly the sense of history that the white race, under the conduct of the Germans,

arrives now at the real and definitive domination of the world;" and again, "the hour now sounds when Germany must take its place of power, directing the whole world." Germany has been so thoroughly drilled in this for years that almost every one believes it as implicitly as he believes in the difference between daylight and darkness. It is not a matter for argument; it admits of no real debate; it is the fundamental fact of the modern universe.

It is this very honesty of their self-deceit that makes the Germans so dangerous. Their faith in a world-absorbing destiny for Germany is the blind notion of children who cry peevishly, "We want to become a world people! Let us remind ourselves that the belief in our mission as a world-people has arisen from our originally *purely spiritual* (my italics) impulse to absorb the world into ourselves." (Prof. F. Meinecke.) That "spiritual" impulse so evident for the past three years is a favorite doctrine of the German clergy, and we find the Herr Pastor Lehmann indulging himself in such genial religious *camouflage* as "It is enough for us to be a part of God," and "the German soul is God's soul: it shall and will rule over mankind." Dr. Preuss rises to noble heights of inspiration with his "He (God) has by His hidden intent designated the German people to be His (the Messiah's) successor." Pastor J. Rump's outcry that the Entente Allies fighting Germany are a "Jesusless horde, a crowd of the Godless" whom he fears because "our defeat would mean the defeat of His Son in humanity," is almost as emetic as his other cry—"We are fighting for the cause

of Jesus within mankind!" It is Dr. Preuss, however, who touches the uttermost height of this blasphemous idealization of Germany with the lines: "God has in Luther practically chosen the German people, and that can never be altered, for is it not written in Roman xi: 29, 'For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance'?" He explains modestly that the Germans necessarily have not fully merited this calling and election: "it proceeds from the sheer grace of God, so we can maintain it without any Pharisaism whatever."

Can or need anything more be said? Surely I have presented evidence enough to any doubting Thomas to prove that the committing of atrocities by the Army and Navy, and the acceptance and glorification of them by the German people is the logical progression of their development in degeneracy under the tutelage of their megalomaniacs: critics, philosophers, clergy, historians, professional soldiers, and the ruler who holds his powers by Divine right —we have his own word for it.

And the psychology back of it all is the false German philosophy of life, a psychology of madness, that carries—let us hope—its own cure of complete self-destruction.

## CHAPTER XI

### HATE

When the incredible reports of the German villainies were well authenticated, there cropped out simultaneously an amazing rumor. France, we were told, actually did not hate Germany for what she was doing. It was superhuman —impossible! We could not believe that the French, fiery by nature, volatile and temperamental as we had known them to be, could go on fighting in the old spirit that had always characterized them in warfare—from the days when that great French knight and gentleman stepped out before his Army and bowed to his British foe with the courteous request: "Will you not do me the honor to fire first, sir?"

The explanation lies in the unwillingness of the Frenchman to believe in the German's announced policy of frightfulness, in his earnestly maintained conviction that the outrages of ten thousand kinds were simply part of the madness due to war itself: the sporadic madness, in a word, of the individual under the impulse of the greater madness. There is no doubt, too, that a chivalrous people can never fully credit the unchivalrous with their full measure of indecency. That spirit burned clear and unwavering through all the first three years of the combat. The Frenchman emphatically did not hate the German.

And then came the heyday of hate, of Teutonic hate—and the Frenchman learned overnight to hate with a fierceness and profundity as fiery as his chivalry. Germany has with her own blundering, stupid, material efficiency raised a wall so thick and strong and high between herself and France that I believe no payment of indemnities, no re-establishment of friendly relations, no lapse of centuries even, will ever breach it and readmit Germany to the ancient basis of *equal* intercourse. Hatred is usually to be deprecated for its folly; sometimes it is justified, as hatred for sin; but there are times, and this is one of them, when hatred—like Bret Harte's murder of the "Chinee"—is not only justifiable, but positively praiseworthy; and he would be a poor specimen of Frenchman who did not, from the very uttermost depths of his soul, hate the German for his atrocious bestiality, to-day, to-morrow, and forever; hate him with the hatred of loathing, of bitter contempt, with the conscious, righteous ire of an outraged superior who can not even think of the unclean creature without revulsion.

I must not be understood by this panegyric of hate to mean that the Frenchman can ever, under any circumstances, so far forget himself as to ordain a régime of like viciousness. France could not be guilty of that and remain France. So her hatred is tinged with bitterness by the knowledge that Germany deliberately trusted to an honor she herself was far from possessing, and worked her diabolisms secure in the certainty that she would not be required to pay in kind.

It is unlikely even that individuals will wreak any great amount of personal vengeance. I picked up a lone French Sergeant one day on the Grands Boulevards, and gave him luncheon.—The whole war is right here on those Paris Boulevards. A sympathetic ear, a few invitations to luncheon, a few adroit, tactful questions, and one could build up the story complete: every atrocity, every plan, every success and defeat—and every man's own hopes and fears and dreams.—We talked of the duration of the war, and the Sergeant shrugged. He did not know, nor did he seem especially to care, how long the struggle would continue. I was mildly surprised, since all France is weary and heart-sick. Then he added: "If it goes on another year and a half, we shall get across the Rhine, now that you Americans are here to help us." He hesitated a moment, his blunt peasant face working with emotion that finally refused to be suppressed. "And when we do cross the border—God protect Germany!"

Masking my astonishment, I inquired casually: "Why? Will you pay off some old scores?"

He leaned forward, pointed knife and fork straight at me, transfixed me with his bayonet eyes. "*Me voici, mon ami!* I have nothing left. When the *boches* retreated from my district, my wife was about to be confined. Two of them attacked her. My seventy-two-year-old mother interfered. They used both women; both died in their hands. Then they blew up my house, obliterated my garden, my town. I am *mad* when I think of it. Can I withhold my

men when we cross the border? Suppose they want to do the same things—can I say no, with my eyes still seeing what I have seen?"

He can not—*but he will!* When that day comes, if he sees a German woman struggling in the grip of one of his own men, he will spring at the *poilu* like a tiger. The spirit that again and again has threatened dire vengeance and mutilation to Germans, and then fed them instead, notwithstanding the heat of action and the elation of capture, will not—in the large—permit the escutcheon of France to be stained.

To come back to the issue—what was it roused France to a true appreciation of the German spirit? It was the Devastated Region—formless, nameless, unnameable—the visible manifestation of everything heartless, bestial, obscene—the essence of German *Kultur*. Never before seeing that stricken district had I realized how close to his mother Earth a man can be. I found myself bound to her gaping wounds by the rusted, tangled barbed wire, my own heart torn in sympathy with hers. I knew, too, that the frontiers of to-day are no longer black lines on a green map, no longer hypothetical divisions for commercial purposes. They are red streams on a groaning, encumbered earth. And to-morrow there will be no frontiers at all—for to-morrow there will be nothing but civilization.

My visit to the Devastated Region was made on the strength of a courteous note—*"Le Grand Quartier Genéral a accordé votre voyage de région de Noyon pour mardi,"*

etc. There were six of us in the party, four Americans, a French *Aumonier,* or Chaplain—twice decorated for heroism under fire—and a Spanish Canon of the Cathedral of Cádiz, acting as correspondent for the clerical newspaper of his city. Our Staff Captain had his hands full to keep us reasonably bunched and fairly near our schedule; for some one of the party was invariably seized with the impulse to dart off to one side to see something else just at the moment when all the rest had finished and were starting toward the motors. By miracles of tact and courtesy he succeeded better, I imagine, than he had anticipated. Certainly our *dossiers*—the little booklets kept by the Foreign Office to show exactly how each one behaved on his various trips, and filed away for reference, so that a man who proved undesirable could be politely excluded from France in the future if such a course seemed wise or essential—recorded no very dreadful misconduct, since we all had opportunities later on to visit other regions.

The train carried us from the cavernous Gare du Nord to Compiègne, where the motors picked us up and sped us first to Ribécourt, through a lovely rolling country all gashed and ridged yet with trenches, both French and German, guarded by huge tangles of barbed wire overgrown with "foolish herbs"—the name the poetic French give plain weeds.

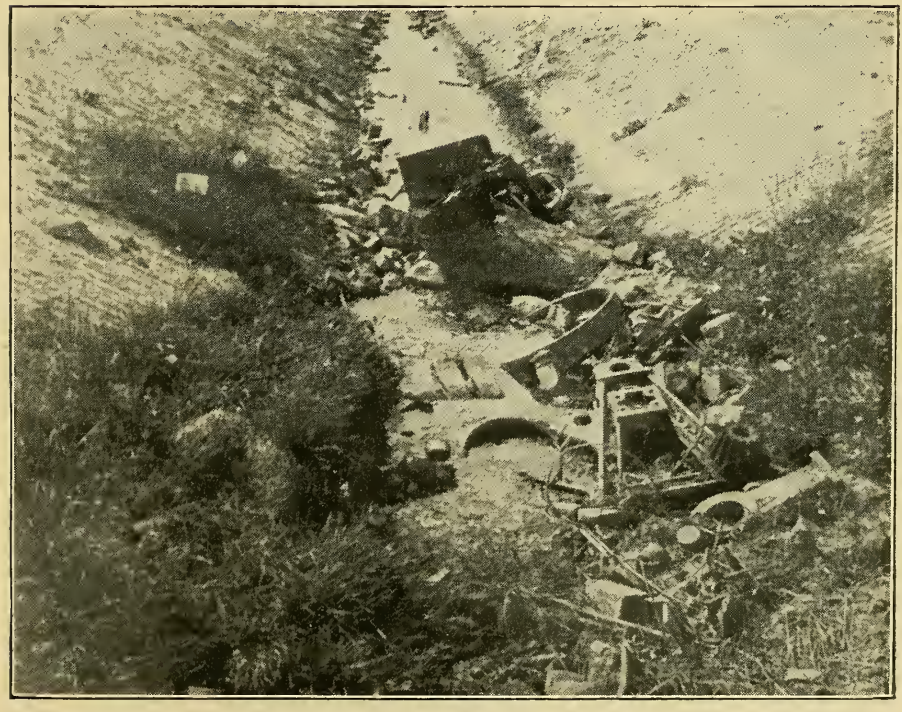
Ribécourt was not an important town in its prime. To-day its poor houses have the air of having been poignarded treacherously in the back, their faces smashed in

afterward by an assassin as brutal as he was cowardly. When I think back to that sunny afternoon, how the racial characteristics of our little party stand out!—the Americans unashamedly profane; the *Aumonier* volubly distressed; Canon Cádiz a sphinx! What he thought I never knew; but I see him always a figure all dull black, with mute hands upraised in horror.

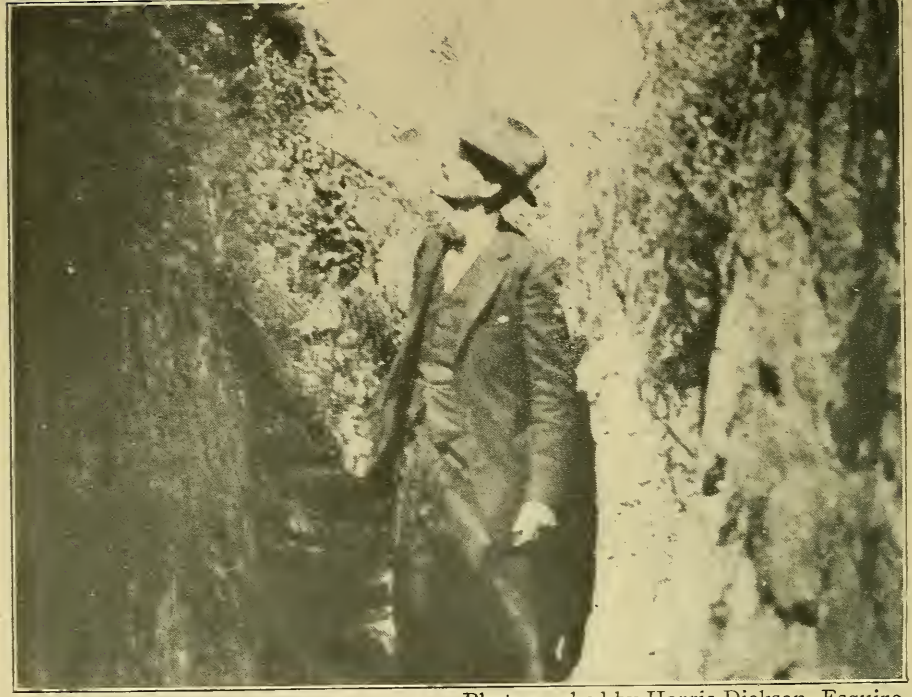
To the *Aumonier* it was a doubly painful spectacle, because here the pilgrims coming down from Belgium to Lourdes used to stop for refreshment and prayer. In a few graphic words he sketched us the scenes: the long train stopping, the pilgrims in their Sunday best before the altars in the hospital cars and outside along the track, chanting their prayers to the obbligato of the sweet-voiced larks; the townsfolk coming up with gracious little offerings of food and drink and good wishes to these seekers after hope and health. The last pilgrimage was in June of 1914. Barely two months afterward the nurses who always accompanied the train were gathered at Louvain, not to aid the sick, but to succor the victims; and the hospital cars were in a bloodier service along the banks of the Yser. And now, not even a lark sings matins in Ribécourt—the *boche* shot them all.

If I could only give the picture that gentle, kindly old priest gave of those German soldiers humorously picking off the larks—! Or if he had preached to France—a new Peter Hermit in a new crusade—with half the fire he poured out for us, the Army would have bivouacked on

A shell-crater. The hole measures about two hundred and twenty-five feet in circumference, more than sixty feet in diameter and about twenty-five feet deep

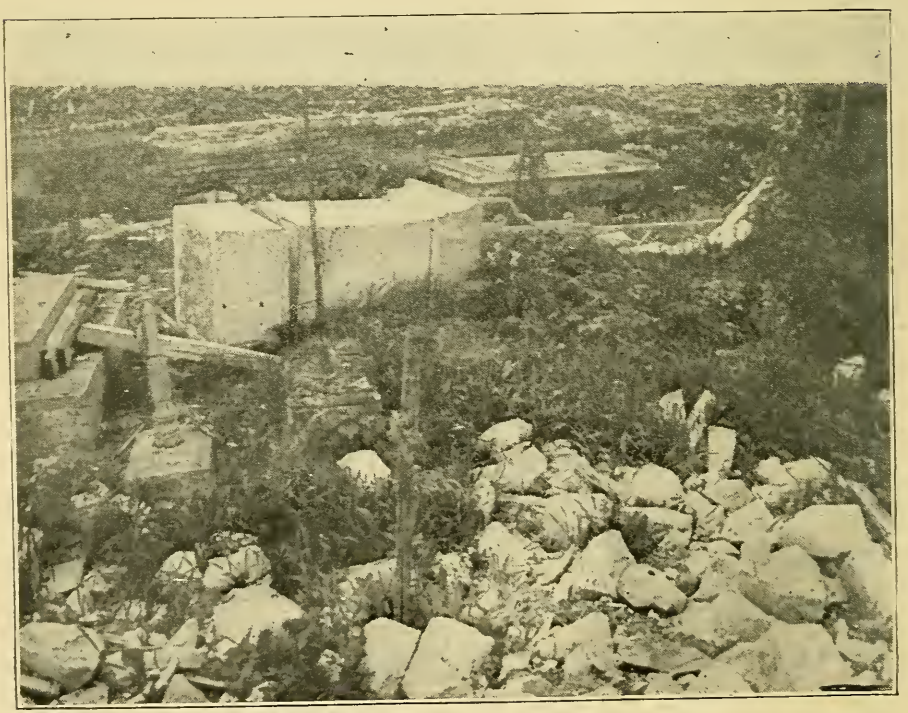


What the German does not demolish he makes useless. Essential parts of machinery thrown into a ditch



Photographed by Harris Dickson, Esquire

Mr. Riggs in the captured German trench at Ribécourt that runs under and through the church and graveyard. At this point the trench is about ten feet deep



A French cemetery where the Hun has amused himself by tearing down and defiling figures of the Crucified Christ, and desecrating graves

Unter den Linden before this! Yet he was an *Aumonier,* sacerdotal dispenser of alms, of the sacred things, purveyor of Spirit to the Regiment. He was the type of man one can go to with troubles: rotund, ruddy, wholly human, his hair all on his chin in a splendid gray beard instead of on his bald pate, where a deep, ragged dent told of the shrapnel wound he would explain only by the single word, "Touched!" As we left the train at Compiègne he darted over to the café, the long black skirts of his soutane streaming out behind, and returned panting with a box of candy "for my good children wherever we find them." He made quite a joke out of giving us each a single piece to taste, and no more; for sweets are precious to the fighting man. His pockets were like a boy's, full of bits of string, a knife, matches, cigarettes for his "children," crumpled letters, and a curious little leather bag fastened with a snap. In it was an ugly, almost square bit of *"scghahp-nell"* which he said, with twinkling eyes, he had carried "three months in my shoulder—two years in my pocket. They gave me this for it!" he added, unconscious as a child, patting affectionately the bronze Croix de Guerre beside the star of the wounded on his broad chest. But how did he get it? "Oh, *la, la!* It was nothing, nothing at all! Merely helping a wounded a little!"

At Dreslincourt, a few hundred meters farther along, there were houses completely battered to pieces and others right beside them spared, one would think, by miracle—until one understands that they were used by German

officers until the last moment, when there was no time to ruin them in the haste of retreat. A sunken dirt road wanders across the pleasant fields to a maze of German trenches and tremendous, concrete dugouts with roofs reinforced by steel. Before them the road, *camouflé* with nets and branches, was dappled with shade and sunshine that gave it a pleasant air not even the gas-alarm bell still hanging in its place could take away. But the dugouts themselves were dark, unwholesome, smelly places. What did they think about as they lay on their unclean straw in there, those vanished Germans who left behind them crumpled copies of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* and the *Neue Freie Presse,* broken bottles and tin cans? As they looked cautiously out over the smiling fields toward the French wire, did they think, did they reason and ponder as the men of the other Armies are doing in like conditions? What dreams did they dream—of conquest, of loot, of violence or of home? Or did they merely browse like other animals?

After Dreslincourt, Chiry and Passel, came the beginning of that frightful spectacle of cut-off trees we were to see so much of in a few hours, the evidence everywhere of a destruction as carefully calculated, as coldly ferocious as it was absolutely thorough: the planned-in-advance annihilation of every source of riches, of even life itself for the soil! Here miles of cement telegraph and power-transmission poles had been dynamited, each on the same side, each at the same height above the ground, each felled in the one direction. What a sight these fallen symbols of the

god of the thunderbolt, each with its quaint, twisted, Chinese-dragonlike tails of useless wires! Everything that had once stood erect lay flat—every bit of destruction pointed the finger of mute condemnation after the retreating vandals.

The pillaged, violated graves of the blasted château at little Mont Renaud fired us with a righteous wrath as furious as it was helpless. The ancient family vault, containing eleven sepulchers—nine of adults, two of children—had been blown open. The wood of the caskets had been smashed, the leaden coffins breached enough to permit infamous hands to prowl inside and pull out part of the sacred dust. What ghoul even could find pleasure in disturbing the ashes of those long dead—and in defiling, in hideously outraging what was not worth stealing? It was incredible; more incredible still, that the two tiny caskets in their little niches above should have been pulled aside and left askew, but otherwise unharmed.—Champier Cemetery is another black blot on the dark German name, with its smashed tombstones, its violated graves, its funerary monuments recut into pretentious memorials of the odious dead who had helped before their deaths to do these things!

Noyon, the city where John Calvin once lived, was not by any means destroyed. It was not even uninhabitable, and the streets displayed a dolorous animation as we rolled through, with workmen patching up the traces of the furious fighting that had preceded the retreat, and forlorn-looking citizens here and there returned to take up life

all over again. Calvin's house—hardly more than a small stone tenement—we found up a tiny side street near the main square, a street more a slit for air between the houses than a real passageway. The German had not laid so much as a finger upon that historic dwelling. Why? A Protestant Swiss periodical tried to answer by pointing out that the Protestant Germans no doubt remembered Germany would celebrate the fourth centenary of the Reformation in October. What could be more evident than their intention to "notify Protestants the world over that what they regarded as sacred, they spared, even in the midst of their comprehensive rage." In one of the lower rooms of the house a mason was mixing plaster of paris to repair some cracks in the ceiling, and in another a souvenir-maker was bending over his bench full of empty rifle cartridge-shells. They gave us a cheery good day when we entered, but beyond that they were speechless, as good artisans should be. The Cathedral is less damaged than I expected: only the organ shows traces of the invader's sacrilegious hand—its pipes ravished to make shell-bands.

When the French entered Noyon, every building in any condition at all was immediately put to some service. One house seemed absolutely untouched, but it was filled with a frightful odor. Everything was polluted—beds, tables, closets, garments, books in the library. Fortunately, it seemed, the damage was not irreparable, and the house-cleaning was instant. It made not a particle of difference —the stench remained. Powerful disinfectants were used

with lavish hand—no use! From cellar to attic the enraged *poilus* disinfected—and hunted. At last they found that the water-tank, stowed away under the high pent-roof, had been used as a latrine, and the plumbing system throughout the entire house impregnated. Still, even that could be remedied. It was worth doing, for the house was too valuable to destroy. Before it could be done, the crowning infamy was discovered—a laboriously constructed separate system of piping, conducting the essence of this mass of putrefaction to no less than twenty separate orifices inside the walls, whence it dripped down to spread its concealed seeds of death. Nothing could be done. That perfectly sound house had to be completely demolished as a menace to the public health. How the Germans must have relished such a kultural joke!

The city had its share of the deportations and abuses, even, as a French Colonel testified, to the issuing of requisitions for pretty girls. And a brutal Prussian, while the girls were being gathered, weeping and hysterical, for a fate they understood only too well, bellowed at one of them in the hearing of her friends: "What are you sniveling about? It is a signal honor to be able to serve a Prussian officer as his 'orderly'!"

The devastation is complete throughout the region between Noyon and the high, rolling ground before St. Quentin, where the German lines held. Every well was poisoned, and wherever there is a tap, glaring red signs were visible: "Dangerous Water! Do Not Drink!" Nor man nor beast

at first could slake his thirst at these mocking founts; and even in September the small white signs proclaiming *"Eau Potable"* seemed far apart. It is useless to enumerate any but the more impressively ruined towns we saw. There are others literally by the hundred in that broad area, torn and soiled and shamed by the German soldiery in stolid enjoyment of its orders.

Chauny the silent runs the gamut from peace to war, with its hardly-touched *faubourg* or suburb, and its obliterated center. When their two-year tenure of the town was all but over, the Germans herded into the suburb everybody not destined to accompany them on the retreat—a wretched little company of the aged, the sick and infirm, the crippled, whom they stripped of everything, even to some of the clothing they had on. Then the whole place was looted, systematically, efficiently, and the town proper set on fire. Fifty of the *renconcentrés* were killed in the process. As the Germans marched hurriedly away with their slaves and their plunder, and the stricken, whimpering cast-offs stood appalled in their quarter, the field guns in the distance took a last, vicious strafe at it that killed fifteen more of them. Slowly the flames died down. Chauny was not.

We could read the piteous story as we passed slowly through. The destruction had none of the systematic thoroughness that had wiped out other towns. It was wild, chaotic, hasty in the extreme, the work of madmen hard-pressed for time and conscious of an enemy on their very heels. Houses stood split in two, one half gone, the other

intact. In one a bed stood on what was left of a floor, three legs on it, the other in the air, the tattered bedclothes flapping in the wind. Leaden gutters twisted into serpentine shapes writhed about shattered eaves. In the main square rose an unusually lofty wreck. Before March of 1917 it had been the Hotel de Ville, or Town Hall. Now it was recognizable chiefly by the Pompeiian red walls of its carefully-labeled *Salle de Conseil,* where a big white plaster bust of the Republic—the only thing left—calmly surveyed the desolation below, totally unaware that its dignified Grecian nose was smoked perfectly black!

Near the edge of the town stood the ruin of a savings-bank and safe deposit. A low fragment of the façade, and part of the sign, were left; that was all. The steel girders holding up the floor and making the top of the safe deposit vault had been twisted by the explosion of a mine as one twists paper spills. Half-buried in the débris, one of the tiers of safe deposit boxes showed a melancholy, battered face. Every box had been jimmied open. Whenever the Germans left a town the banks were systematically plundered, all the specie and negotiable paper sent to Germany; all the private papers, such as wills, notes of hand, deeds, mortgages, etc., of no value for sale to the conquerors, were tossed out into the street and burned. How the tangle of personal property will be cleared up will depend entirely upon the good sense and charity of the persons involved, since most of the records have been destroyed.

Just outside the town, on one of those roads *camouflé*

for miles by ugly strips of burlap strung between lofty poles, a factory had been blown up. What it had been I do not know, beyond the fact that it had had a lofty chimney and a vast amount of internal machinery. Now it looked more like a heap of giant's jackstraws than anything else, without form or shape. Farther along, another works of some sort stood outwardly intact—but every essential piece of its machinery had been removed and thrown into a little stream, to rust into uselessness and cripple the local industry. Perhaps it was cheaper and quicker to do that than to bring together enough explosives to demolish the whole structure. The methods varied with the exigencies of the place and moment, the policy and its results never.

Frières-Faillouel is so completely gone one may stand at what used to be its outskirts and ask, "Where?"

Not far distant the mutilated plain is dominated by that amazing mound built by the soldiers for the amusement of the Kaiser's second son, fat Prinz Eitel-Friedrich: a little butte laboriously heaped up in perfect geometrical contours, moated by a regular wet fosse, crowned with a fine rustic summerhouse. Above the front entrance to this royal lodge was the inscription in German blackletter, "Hubertus-Haus" (St. Hubert's Lodge). What must the saintly patron of hunters think of Eitel-Fritz's hunt? Big wooden toadstools served as seats, a cross-section of a giant pine, brought from some distant forest at enormous labor, as a table. I wondered the Prince had not sent back to Germany for the hideous little colored terra cotta gnomes

and trolls and other horrors with which Germans love to stud their fairest gardens—a choice example of this is to be seen in the suburbs of our own Pasadena!

Beer and scenery, swilled together in that belvedere of abomination! A grand sweep of broad, rolling vale flanked by the tender shades of the living hills, at this distance unmarred by trace of cannon-scar or savage ax; far off, quivering in the sunshine under the immense blue vault, the twin spires of Laon and those of St. Quentin; and somewhere below the horizon the City of Dreams, the coveted siren of the imagination, the German goal—Paris! The princely beer must have been sweet on such a spot, where the princely imagination had reared this tumulus after the fashion of his Hunnish forebears. Probably the princely siestas were sweet also. Von Treitschke says: "The Latin has no feeling for the beauty of a forest; when he takes his repose in it he lies upon his stomach, while we rest on our backs." *Hoch der deutscher embonpoint!* How *could* a German lie upon his stomach?

About the mound in the branches of fruit tree and mighty plane and sycamore bordering the highroad, bird voices mingled sweetly with *Nun danket alle Gott* above the distant bruit of the guns until the days when that "triumphant, strategic retreat" began with the swinging of the ax. Clear beyond the range of the eye German efficiency proceeded methodically and unhurriedly to assassinate the orchards, where the buds were already formed and all but ready to burst for joy.

By squads and companies the axmen went forth in the dawning. When they returned at even to their beer and green sausage and military chorals, the little fruit trees that had made this halcyon vale a land of jellies and preserves and candied fruits, a fat, rich land sweet to the nostrils in spring as to the eye, lay in rows, bleeding mutely to death. Every tree was felled at the same height precisely; every one was felled in the same direction. They lie there yet by the thousands and the scores of thousands. Along the road, the axmen were aided by lusty sawyers who worked with equal skill upon those stately, those proud and giant poplars and buttonwoods France had grown so lovingly these many years to shade her traveling children and their flocks. They, too, were felled all at the same height, all with their noble crowns pointed in the same direction. The inconceivable sadness of the scene moved the Russian Prince Vladimir Ghika to muse upon it: "The uniformity of orientation, the universality in the destructive measures, exactly executed, meticulously observed, in the middle of the ash-heap of annihilated villages, produces a strange impression as of a ritual. One feels himself an observer of the results of a terrific barbarian sacrifice to clear their conscience before some deity of death."

Eitel Fritz did his worst. Nature, when he had gone, sent her kindly dews and vivifying rains upon the butchered innocents as they lay there in rows upon the sodden earth, and lo, by hundreds and by thousands they bloomed, spending their last atom of vitality to fill the eye with color

and the air with sweetness again, in vain but beautiful protest against the savagery that had laid them low.

Jussy, that never was shelled, was razed house by house, tree by tree, until to-day nothing is left higher than a man's knees—save for the brickheap of the church—and many a house is only a bald spot in the tangle of ruin. For cold-blooded, elaborately-planned destruction, carried out with the ruthless, detailed care characteristic of German Staff plans, Jussy has no equal.

More than two thousand inhabitants had made the town what any French town of like size is in a similarly fertile and productive district: one big family of neighbors with the same interests and hopes and occupations, contented with little, asking naught but the peace of a cheery old age among ancestral conditions and possessions. Germany denied them this. And not content with the destruction of trees and buildings, she uprooted and trampled every vine, every shrub, every living thing, blew up the soil itself, sowed mines under the roads and wherever men might wish to plow, dropped dead animals and ordure into the springs, smashed the bridge across the river, and filled the stream itself with machinery and agricultural implements not otherwise made useless. Before the work was completed the French advance trod hard upon the *boche* heels, and the church alone is not so wiped out that it can not be recognized. Mines were hurriedly set off under each corner, and the edifice collapsed upon itself in an enormous heap of brick and stones and mortar. From the blasted, defiled

cemetery behind, some Teutonic wag wrenched a great iron cross, thrust it upright into the brickheap, and scribbled in mocking French on its horizontal arms, *"C'est la guerre."* And some one else printed above it in strong characters the same line that appears across the façade of the riven town hall of Péronne: *"Nicht ärgern, nur wundern —Don't rage—wonder!"*

I sat on the edge of the ruin surveying the desolation, and talking with *Père* G——, a soldier priest, when I became conscious that he was not listening. I looked up. A commanding figure in his horizon blue, his big fists clasped upon his broad chest, his eyes blinded by the tears that flowed unashamed, he stared unhearing, unseeing, upon the broad swath of the retreat. Shepherds of souls! How it must wring these men to know their vocation is no longer to save, but to destroy—to prove their piety, their fitness as spiritual leaders by their valor in the field!

There is a headquarters here, or was in September, and we were taken over to be presented to the General Ixe and his delightful staff, who entertained us royally at tea. The headquarters building had big, dry, well-ventilated cellars and corridors banked with sandbags and corrugated sheet-iron which afforded fair shelter against everything but direct bombardment from the air. A day or two before our visit a *boche avion* had tried for the building, missed it by perhaps a hundred feet, and demolished a motor and its occupants. Before that similar visits had battered up both building and officers, so we were warned to take instant cover if a hostile machine appeared.

The main salon was decorated gaily with multi-colored bunting and the flags of the Allies, from Siam to the United States. There was some dubiety in the mind of the senior Major about the Chinese republican flag, and he confided his doubts that he had enough stripes and colors in the piebald affair, which some considerate soul had labeled carefully *"Drapeau de la Chine,"* so that none need mistake it for playful *camouflage.* A sudden stir announced *Monsieur le Genéral,* a fine, short, sturdy figure of a man with kindly eyes that took in everything, and gave nothing back by way of comment. He talked with us a few moments, expressed his satisfaction that the United States was at last an ally in fact as well as in soul, drank a toast with us, and was gone.

How wonderful the French imagination, to call their Engineers who work marvels of rehabilitation, *Génie!* Aladdin's genii of the lamp could hardly do more. The young Lieutenant of *Génie* who replaced the old stone bridge by a temporary wooden structure strong enough to pass artillery, had lived some time in New York. With the Brooklyn Bridge in mind, he contrived to make his lofty wooden piers with their hempen cables, skeletons though they were, look like the towering edifice of stone and steel across the East River. But for fear his work might pass unrecognized, he had the lintels of each pier carved, in graceful remembrance of his model:

JUSSY'S BROOKLYN

## CHAPTER XII

### RECONSTRUCTION

Appalling Devastated Region of France! Would that every American might be taken through it to see something of what frightfulness means, to realize what might, saving our Allies, have been our portion! But frightfulness has failed to bring France to her knees. Neither has it brought her into the arms of her violator, as W. A. Kuhn prophesied back in 1914 at the beginning of the war: "The future must lead France once again to our side; we will heal it of its aberrations, and, in brotherly subordination to us, it may share with us the task of guiding the fate of the world"! And so, while most of her energy is still focused implacably upon war and the defeat of her enemy, she is serenely able to begin rehabilitating the devastated houses, the devastated soil, the yet more devastated souls of her children, to be ready, when peace comes, to take up life once more with clear eyes and a vision unclouded by the black memories of outrage.

The smoke of the French guns was hardly dissipated before the region was invaded by rescuers who immediately fell to work to clean up, to repair, to bring the essentials of life to the returned refugees. The looting of the towns had been as complete as their subsequent destruction.

Every useful particle of metal, rubber, wool, leather, cordage, paper; all the food for both man and beast; all the vehicles; every piece of furniture; bric-à-brac, objects of art, musical instruments; even old clothes and shoes that could be utilized to make anything, were loaded on carts in classified lots and sent back to Germany to be converted for the use of the Army, or sold in the Loot Warehouse established officially to let the Germans at home buy for a song whatever they might need, or desire as souvenirs. The plunderers did not overlook bed and table linen, kitchen and table ware, glass and crockery, no matter how poor and humble. Faithful disciples of Nietzsche! His ruthless doctrines that the world merely smiled at as the vaporings of a madman were the text the Germans expounded here to the very letter—"Life is, in its essence, appropriation, injury, the overpowering of whatever is foreign to us and weaker than ourselves, suppression, hardness . . . !" What they could not possibly remove, they destroyed and befouled. The consequence was that when the people drifted back, whether they had shelter or not, there was not a knife or fork or spoon, not a tablecloth or napkin, not a pot or pan, not even a tin dipper left. Not a kitchen stove remained for cooking, nor was there anything to cook.

I wish I could make the awfulness of the situation real to the reader. I can't! The mind can not grasp such an utter vacuum. Nobody who has not been on the spot can realize what it means to face the *absolute* lack of every single thing necessary to maintain life. So the first work of reconstruc-

tion was not so much to give the victims adequate shelter as it was to provide beds, coverings, food and the things with which to cook and to eat it. Townsfolk and peasants alike proved difficult indeed to manage—half-crazed by what they had been compelled to undergo and to witness, and, worst of all, to fear. Reason they would not listen to. They flew to the ruins that had once been their homes, and their grief, their rage, their pitiful impotence would have torn any but a German heart. When the work of reconstruction was commenced, hundreds of them insisted on remaining in the damp, unsanitary shelters they had burrowed under the ruins of their houses. The rescuers—among the very first to bring help were many heroic Americans, women as well as men—had provided, so far as possible, for every contingency. But for all their thoughtfulness and prevision, they were unable to bring everything needed on those first emergency trips. Little by little something was done for each—clothes here, food there, a bed yonder; a nonagenarian tottered away under the unaccustomed load of a mattress and covers for himself and his feeble wife; a ten-year-old staggered under the weight of a burden heavy enough for any full-grown man; an ancient dame scowled with exaltation over her wheelbarrow-load of mattress, bedding, kitchen-table and odds and ends, fierce as a mother hen if any dared approach her.

The major portion of the work was naturally the task of the French Army. While the ruins still smoked, it extracted hidden mines, gathered up unexploded shells and

bombs, put the roads in condition for hard usage, pacified the almost wild inhabitants who had remained in the region, and enticed back scattered refugees. It sent out geographical, agricultural and arboricultural experts everywhere. They surveyed the eighty thousand slaughtered fruit trees and revived, crown-grafted, budded; decided upon the best and quickest way to get the people to producing their own food again; and set the example by drafting artillery horses and men to plow and seed and cultivate the wounded earth. The *Génie* in the vicinity of Noyon alone, by May 20, 1917, had patched up innumerable houses, planted fifty-two hectares of ground, started and carried well toward success those innumerable little truck-gardens with which this corner of fertile Picardy is filled. And everywhere the simplest, most direct methods were followed. For once, in the face of distress, France tossed red tape to the winds and worked only for results, but with a thoroughness that assured the permanency of the results.

The task was beyond our conception. The Prefect of the Somme reported that in his district alone no less than 238 communes had been destroyed, with a total loss of more than 20,000 houses. Perhaps this sort of thing was what that pet anathema of all true Britons, the renegade H. S. Chamberlain, meant in glorifying the German Army's "peaceful work behind the fronts" which "bears witness to a thorough spiritual culture and a living organization such as the world has never seen."

Between the Army constructions and the aid coming

from outside sources, mostly from societies of civilians aided by British and American effort and money, 1,100 temporary huts or houses had been assured by September 15, 1917, though only 142 habitable shelters and fifty-four barracks had been actually constructed, eight of which were combinations of town hall and school. More than half a million francs' worth of agricultural machinery and tools had been distributed, 500 implements smashed by the Germans repaired, and 1,500 more brought to the shops established by the British at Péronne for repair. Similar forges and machine-shops were in process of construction in other localities, an immense dépot of seeds and foodstuffs established in one place, and another started not far off. More than a million and a half horses, cows, sheep, pigs, rabbits and chickens had been distributed to give the peasantry a new start, and six batteries of ten tractors each were plowing and harrowing steadily, with six more similar batteries to come shortly, while already thirty of the poisoned cisterns, 265 of the wells and twenty important ponds had been sanified. All this in one district in five months!

The French mind has an attachment to the soil entirely foreign to our experience. Not even bombardment can always drive the French peasant from his ancestral acres; he clings to his tiny glebe with a tenacity which seems to us both foolhardy and nonsensical. With my own eyes I have seen peasants working calmly in their fields, seemingly indifferent to the murder-music of the shells flying over their heads. Paradoxically enough, once the peasant

is dislodged, it requires more than material things to bring him back and reroot him in his proper sphere. There was but one way apparent for its accomplishment: to bring back the Mayor of his town, and establish at least the phantom of his commune.

Since to the peasant mind the commune is the extension or expansion of his own family, what more natural than that he is eager to return to his home when he knows he will find the Mayor and his family already there—housed, perchance, in a wet cellar or a former stable, but there, and ready to give him the paternal advice and scoldings and unflagging encouragement he feels he has a right, as a son of France, to expect? The very last thing an American farmer would want would be a meddlesome official to pry into what he was doing and worry him with advice; nor would he be greatly encouraged by such efforts. The Frenchman, however, pitches in with a will, his neighbors hear the Mayor and Big Jim and their families are back, and before any one quite realizes it, all of the town that can possibly get back have returned. But how pitiful a tale the figures tell—250 of the original seven hundred inhabitants have come back to their native Vrély, three hundred to Sermaize, four hundred to Lagny, fifteen of the 220 to pretty Folies, twenty-four to Margny-of-the-Cherries, twenty of the 287 to Bouchoirs, only one to Roiglise! What tragedies of death, of disappearance, of forced labor in captivity lie behind these significant accounts of the repatriation!

Ruskin had no vision of the modern Hun when he wrote,

of past invasions of France: "Whatever the name, or the manners, of their masters, the ground delvers must be the same, and the goatherd of the Pyrenees, and the vine-dresser of Garonne, and the milkmaid of Picardy, give them what lords you may, abide in their land always, blossoming as the trees of the field, and enduring as the crags of the desert." No; we must look to a twentieth-century German as our prophet. He approves of the complete annihilation of conquered peoples, but says: "To-day this is physically impracticable, but one can imagine conditions which should approach very closely to total destruction."

All the organizations that are at work are cooperating in such a harmonious and judicious division of the task that France is making tremendous strides toward her old, sane, normal life. On their own part, the people are manifesting their heritage from the past—the Celtic temperament whose buoyancy bears them bravely up in stress; the Roman logic that has enabled them to think clearly and to reorganize their whole mode of life on the new basis made necessary by losses and privations; the Frankish love of the soil and industry which has rejuvenated field and home with a swiftness all but incredible.

Innumerable civil organizations have sprung into existence to complete the work the Army began and necessarily can not complete. Each one in its own field, often with the slenderest of resources, is working miracles: surveying and establishing disputed boundaries between farms whose

lines have been obliterated, providing labor, advancing the farmers money against the sale of their expected crops, giving houses to whole communities at a time, and in general reestablishing the social life of the region around the solid bases of the municipality, the school and the church.

One of these organizations, the "Fund for War Devastated Villages," showed me how much an energetic and determined woman can accomplish practically single-handed. The Honorary Secretary, Mrs. Arthur H. Wethy, an American citizen, has performed the miracle of getting ladies of different nationalities to work together, transported quantities of clothing and food to the needy villages between Soissons and Compiègne, made tour after tour of investigation and inspection, and done the large amount of secretarial work required in the interim.

"Oh, if you could only get us a motor!" she cried one day. "We have the occasional use of one rickety old machine; and the Government lends us an Army machine once in a while, but if we only had our own, we could go four times as fast and far. Can't you get us one in America?"

To my own unbounded astonishment, I succeeded in securing a fine new car—and the War Department refused it transportation because of the pressure of military necessities! The headquarters of the Society are at 32, rue Taitbout, Paris. They lack funds, clothing, blankets; they lack everything, and beg America for more, and more, and yet more of everything to meet the pressing need.

One of the largest single undertakings has been that of

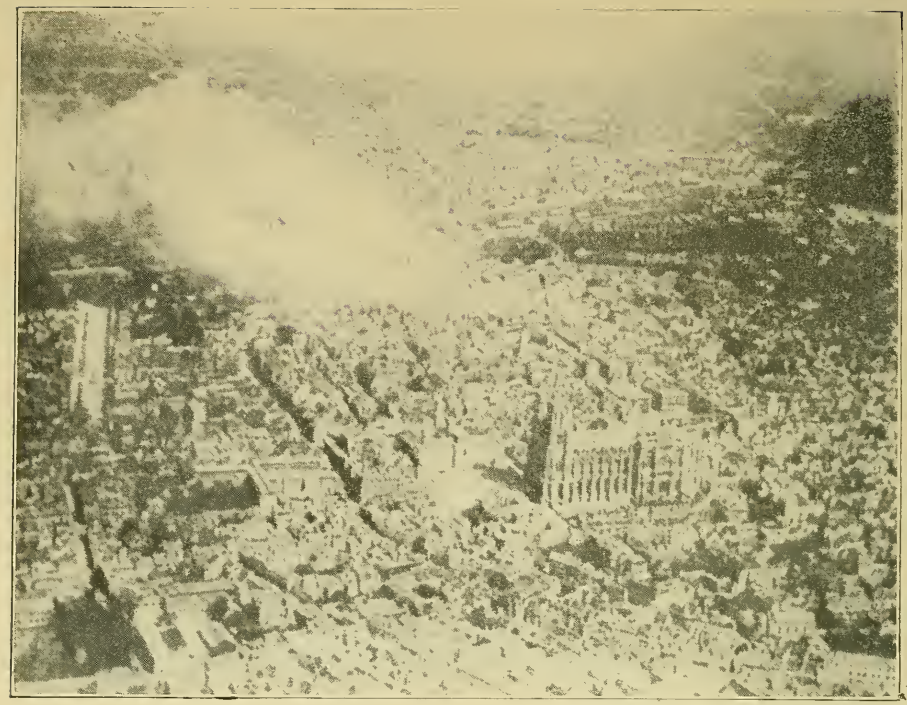
the English Society of Friends, the British Quakers. Fight in battle they would not; but they are spending themselves freely in the reconstitution of that long and horribly desolated section covered by the "front" where the battle of the Marne turned the edge of the invader's sword. The Friends' headquarters are in the obliterated town of Tugny-et-Pont, in the little valley between the Somme and the Canal of St. Quentin, where they cleared a large area of rubbish and mines, and began their work of grace by first of all getting a residence of sorts ready for the Mayor, so that his return might bring its natural consequence of general repatriation.

Already they have reared more than six hundred temporary houses throughout their region, distributed more than a thousand pairs of chickens and hares, 12,000 packets of clothing, 2,500 beds, and in innumerable ways helped more than thirty-five thousand persons in 282 different villages. In addition, they have given the peasants 128,000 francs' worth of seeds and manure, agricultural machinery and garden tools. Their maternity hospital has not only brought to light more than four hundred babies, but it attends them afterward, when the conditions in which their parents are still forced to live threaten the new lives. Their endeavor, in a word, has been to build, not only for the present, but for the future as well. Truly the Friends of England are friends of France!

There is other reconstruction going on in France to-day, reconstruction more kindly, more important than the

Five-year-old boy, of Northern France, whose left hand was cut off by one of the barbarians just before the German retreat

Photographed by Mrs. Arthur H. Wethy, an American and the Honorable Secretary of the Funds for Devastated Villages



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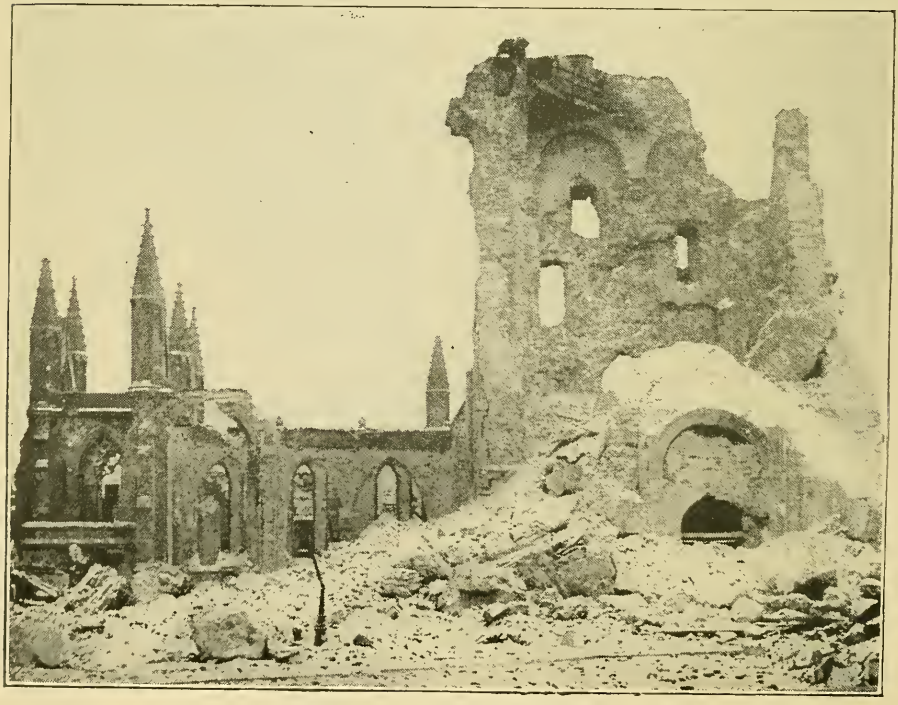
Ruined Reims and its Cathedral. The city is on fire from incendiary shells



Cathedral at Nieuport

building of new houses, or even than restoring the communal life. It is a form of reconstruction that reaches no mere narrow belt of country, like the Devastated Region, but extends its beneficent work from Dunquerque to Marseilles, from Brest to Nancy. It is the rehabilitating of the *mutilés,* the men who have come through the fire permanently maimed. Go out into the highways and byways of France and see them. Look at the carriageman who stands at the door of your hotel, his breast medaled, one sleeve pinned below the decorations. See that taxi driver skilfully manipulating a Noah's Ark of a machine with a wooden foot. Why are the crutches standing behind the pair of yonder municipal or police functionary; why does that Breton sailor still in his naval uniform, wear his hair woman-long, and brushed down over one eye and the whole side of his face? Arms, legs, eyes, faces, features—how can these be reconstituted? How are the men, when the surgeons have done their kindest and best, to be saved from the fate battle would impose upon them by this mutilation —how saved from themselves? Can it be done?

It can! It is being done every day. The world knows already in considerable detail the indefatigable efforts France is making to re-educate these men who have given their own bodies to the torture for her sweet sake. It knows how every art and science have been brought into play to fit the victim of the barbarian for a useful part in the reconstituted society of to-morrow. The trades and professions are being recruited from the *mutilés* who, once

their interest in living is reawakened, grasp at the opportunity to retain their self-respect with the eagerness of the drowning clutching at straws. The blindman makes a marvelously keen-fingered masseur—able to help restore his fellow *mutilés*. Men who did nothing but manual labor before their mutilation have been well schooled in the ordinary sense, then taught telegraphy, shorthand, typewriting beside, and put to work without delay. Even the armless have been re-educated and put into occupations where their false hands are not an insuperable obstacle. One unfortunate, who lost sight, smell, taste and hearing, has blossomed out as an author with a cheery philosophy!

To save the *mutilé* and defeat the profiteer who would exploit him, while at the same time causing no strikes or other industrial disturbances, is a problem that for more than a year has had the attention of the Ministry. The question is not easy of solution, but an approach has been made by the suggestion of the parliamentary socialist group that each employer throughout the country be compelled to employ a certain percentage of his hands from among the *mutilés* at a wage to be determined upon by suitable authorities; the inauguration of a National Placement Bureau working side by side with the National Re-education Office; the distribution of the *mutilés* throughout the country in such a way as to provide them all with a reasonable living without upsetting local conditions; and the cooperation on non-partisan lines of every chamber of commerce, *association patronâle,* and workmen's syndicate. (The

same thing is going on in England, with equal results; and in Canada, where not one of the fourteen thousand *mutilés* thus far received from the front lacks a job.)

In a word, France is laying the foundations for the after-war days by learning how the bustling, important American corporations get things done not only quickly, but well; learning the value of intensive effort, the valuelessness of her traditional red tape. And if perchance in some things she is solving timely questions by taking purely temporary measures to keep her world amove, regardless of the true solution, she knows full well that they are temporary; and to-morrow, when she has had time to wipe the bloody sweat from her eyes, she will astonish us anew—as she astonished us at the Marne—by displaying her genius in a new rôle and developing a national efficiency in economic reconstruction that will go far toward refitting her to assume her former rôle as the banker of civilization.

Standing clear, a marble figure against a black curtain, apart from all the appalling loss of life, far beyond all the other immemorial destruction, is the loss of the beloved Cathedral of Reims. Its universal appeal of beauty and sentiment makes its loss not a loss to the France alone which created it, but to the whole world. Brought forth in that most creative of all the creative centuries, the glorious thirteenth, it marked the soaring crescendo of the Gothic—the noblest example of the noblest and most truly, nationally interpretative type of architecture mankind has

been able to produce since the days of the vast Doric temples of Greece. It rose above the smoky old city a perfect gem of architecture, reared as the supreme offering of a people which felt its chief end to be the glorifying of its Creator.

Not another structure in France, secular or religious, has the meaning of this Cathedral. Almost from the day it was consecrated, the Kings of France, with but very few exceptions, were crowned within its glorious chancel. In that sense, it was the cradle of the nation. The very life of France was given new vitality and fresh impetus in the greatest coronation of all when, in 1429, Joan of Arc, the triumphant maid of the angelic visitants and visions, stood there before the great altar and saw Charles VII crowned as King. And so the vast church, a beneficent white spirit, brooded above the city that huddled about its soaring walls and towers for more than seven centuries, the most pregnant period in the life of France. It saw the dawn and culmination and wane of the Renaissance; it was unmoved while America was found and half won and lost; it witnessed the ambitious plans of the Napoleonic Era and the Empire; its beauty remained undimmed and untouched through the bitter struggle that culminated in the separation of State and Church, within our present memories.

Nothing but *Kultur* could harm it; *Kultur* has done its worst. The shells came howling over from the distant hills in 1914, and they have kept coming ever since. The towers are shot through and through. The great roof is gone.

# ORDRE

## A LA POPULATION LIÉGEOISE

**La population d'Andenne, après avoir témoigné des intentions pacifiques à l'égard de nos troupes, les a attaquées de la façon la plus traîtresse. Avec mon autorisation, le général qui commandait ces troupes a mis la ville en cendres et a fait fusiller 110 personnes.**

**Je porte ce fait à la connaissance de la Ville de Liége pour que ses habitants sachent à quel sort ils peuvent s'attendre s'ils prennent une attitude semblable.**

*Liége, le 22 Août 1914.*

**Général von BULOW.**

## ORDER

To the People of Liége

The population of Andenne, after making a display of peaceful intentions towards our troops, attacked them in the most treacherous manner. With my authorization, the General commanding these troops has reduced the town to ashes and has had 110 persons shot.

I bring this fact to the knowledge of the people of Liége in order that they may know what fate to expect should they adopt a similar attitude.

General von Bulow.

Liége, 22nd August, 1914.

Statues and moldings and delicate, fragile traceries, grotesques and ornaments have been shot away. Within, the fire of the incendiary shells has wiped out all that elaborate magnificence of woodwork and decoration that made it a consecrated marvel. The windows lie in splintered fragments on the floor, mingled in shining protest with the charred débris of the woodwork. The huge pillars that support the crossing threaten at any time to give way and let the walls crumble in to complete the ruin.

Never was there grander manifestation of the Gothic ideal than that triple western portal, about whose lofty doors a goodly company of more than five hundred saints and angels and personages waited in their cloistered niches to welcome the believer to the Presence within. To-day protecting sandbags, ten feet thick and thirty feet high, are piled against the beheaded, mutilated figures and façade, to hold them safe—and in the very closeness of their protection are disintegrating the stone with the accumulated moisture of the passing seasons.

There has been idle talk in both France and America about restoring the Cathedral. There is even a fund in Chicago to be devoted to that purpose when the war shall end. Restore it? Think of those matchless thirteenth- and sixteenth-century windows, built up laboriously, lovingly, of glass which filched the spectrum from the heavens; glass of crimson, of gold, of blue, of green; bits of heaven wrought into jewels for the delight of man; glass the secrets of whose manufacture have been lost! Think of those

spirited statues, and ask yourself if the twentieth-century artisan, who works by the union scale with one eye on the clock, can sit before an insensate block of stone, and, by taking measurements and using his tools, batter out a figure informed and vivified by the same beauty, the same spirituality as the statue executed by the thirteenth-century worker, who toiled from dawn to dusk, whose heart lay at the tip of his chisel, and who worked, not for any paltry wage, but because he felt himself to be glorifying the God who made him!

No! Reims can not be restored. Preserve what can be preserved of the ancient structure. But in the name of God keep the spot where it stood, the débris of its ruin, hallowed and intact! Build, if necessary, a new Cathedral on some other spot, but take no thought for a restoration as idle and empty as it would be purely mechanical. As soon restore heat to the moon!

The Cathedral is not dead, can not die. Far from being a soulless body from which the spirit has fled, it became, in the moment the first German shells burst upon and within it, a new, more glorious, spiritual temple, reared in the hearts of all mankind; the most revered Cathedral in the world, one that can never die even though it be reduced to a formless heap of broken stone.

It is an everlasting monument to both Christianity and *Kultur*.

## CHAPTER XIII

### FRENCH SCHOOLS IN WAR TIME

Many of the facts from which this chapter was prepared were obtained through the courtesy of an official of the French Foreign Office in Paris, Professor X—, of the Sorbonne. If I have used somewhat freely data taken from the various publications and documents with which my professorial friend kindly loaded me, I know the teachers and investigators to whose unusual opportunities and indefatigable efforts the material is due, will be glad to know that their labors have found sympathetic audience in an allied country.

"JOHNNY! Oh, Johnny! Time to go to school, dear."

*"Oui, Maman; oui, j'irais!"*

"Let me see, now—. You have your books, and your slate; and your luncheon—. Oh, child—where is your gas-mask?"

For months, so Madame R—— assured me, that was the formula she went through with *petit* Jean every morning before he started through the shell-torn streets of Reims for the astonishing school the authorities provided for the children of the beleaguered city down in the famous wine-caves, far below the reach of the terrible shells of the *boches.*

Think of it, you American fathers and mothers of tender children, six, eight, ten years old! Picture your little Mary or Jack, if you can—but you can not!—starting off gaily,

as scores of other children did, ready to run if the frightful whistle ripped overhead, ready to thrust each little head into the stifling gas-mask that alone could save the delicate lungs and heart from the lacerating fumes of the gas-shells!

And think, too, what your sensations would be if your little Mary were brought home, as was Madame R——'s little Violette, bleeding and unconscious, but miraculously unhurt. *Petit* Jean explained to me graphically, with all the unconscious dramatic force of a child.

"*Oui,* Monsieur, grace to God, my little sister escaped the *boche* that time." He laughed as he gestured the disappointment of the grim German cannoneers at being cheated of their prey, especially, as he put it, with a curiously old and cynical shrug, since the prey was a plump little girl, who would "bleed so hard"!

"We ran along the street most dangerous, and nothing happened—not an *obus,* not a single shriek of one going over our heads. We got into a safe street. No shells had fallen there at all. Then suddenly, *phwirrrr—boum!* One fell in our safe street. *Mon Dieu,* it was so quick! I was almost across the street when I heard it. Violette was in the middle, right behind me. The *obus* fell about twenty feet away. It struck one end of a rail of the trolley track, just as Violette stepped on the other. Oh, *mon Dieu,* how she flew through the air—thirty feet, Monsieur, on the end of that so-lively rail! *Bang!* against the stone wall she went. She was dead! I knew she was dead. But a kind

gentleman picked her up quickly. We ran home with her. Oh, *les boches—ces sâles bêtes!*" he cried fiercely, and beat the air with his fists. That harsh epithet for the Hun, heard in France only in moments of utter exasperation, came strangely from his sweet little mouth.

Violette smiled up at me shyly, and bade me feel the big scar on her hard little head, "where the wall hit me, Monsieur!"

Would to God I might put into the hearts and minds of those who read this hopelessly inadequate sketch a tithe of the emotion, the reverence, the profound admiration I have felt in studying the work of the French school-teachers on and behind the front, and the insouciant bravery of the children, whose recitations have been so often interrupted by the sour grumble of the guns and the *éclat* of bursting shells close at hand!

How strange that the first drop of French blood shed in the onslaught of barbarism against culture should have been that of a teacher! The very first man to fall was the mobilized school-teacher, Corporal André Peugeot, of the Forty-Fourth Infantry, treacherously shot down at Jonchéry on Sunday morning, August second, twenty-four hours before war was declared. Since then how many other teachers, men and women alike, have fallen under the deadly wave of *Kultur!* Yet the educational life of the country was never more passionately awake, more self-thrilled with the tremendous importance of its task, or better able to grasp opportunity both firmly and with subtle wisdom.

War was formally declared August third, during the summer vacation, when the schools were naturally closed. A month later, the time drew near for their reopening; but how was it to be done, when the men teachers were practically all of them with the colors? A teacher can not be picked up on the street as a ditch-digger may. Then somebody had a happy flash of memory. The conscription laws allow "indispensable workers" to be retained at their shops and works. Who could be more indispensable than a teacher? "We'll have them back!" was the cry. But the teachers themselves had something to say. To a man they refused to come back, declaring it to be not only their duty but their right to keep their places in the ranks.

Though the men did not come back, the schools opened, with numerous young women as substitute teachers. Many of them were mere children themselves, girls totally without experience. Often they were sent far from home, into unusual surroundings. Yet in almost every case their innate good sense and the exhilaration of the circumstances carried them triumphantly through every difficulty.

The secondary, or higher, schools, if compelled to forego experience, at least required age and education in their teachers. To the call for help, men from every walk in life came forward, "each to his calling." Mathematics were the special province of engineers, chemistry and physics of the druggists, Latin of the lawyers and magistrates who in peaceful times drowsed or bickered among their traditions and ordinances. Even the politicians gave a willing

hand; and feeble old ex-teachers, useless for soldiering and the strenuous fight for bread of civil life, begged to be allowed to help. Many an old fellow previously desiccated and shelved was galvanized into comparative youth by the vivifying spark of war. Belgians also lent their aid. Not many in number, they were yet strong in scholarship and eager to work. Early in that first year of the war, some of the greatest of these Belgian savants were occupying chairs in French universities and technical schools where, until that time, a foreign professor was undreamed of. Others of humbler accomplishments were glad to teach in any school offered, and the courtesy France showed by taking them in was repaid by their excellent work in many a place vacant until their advent.

The task of the school authorities was rendered doubly difficult by the lack of proper buildings. When school should have opened in 1914, almost every one of the normal schools as well as more than two thousand public (elementary) schools were in use by the Army as hospitals, barracks and storehouses. Difficulty, however, only increased ardor. With both teachers and buildings lacking, the school year was none the less begun.

What makeshifts there were! The French smile at them now, but there is a certain misty tenderness in the smile. Every building that could house a school, from Palaces of Justice to "palaces" for "movies," from private houses to cafés, was pressed into service. The first contact between teachers and pupils was electrical. Only France mattered.

Everything else for the moment was subordinated in teaching and learning the functions of the country, the proofs of its civilization and its hopes. The white heat of an aroused patriotism fused everything into that mold. In many a school the children's ardor was kept burning clear by the simple inscription over the absent teacher's chair:

"To the memory of ——, our master, dead upon
the field of honor.
Do your duty as he has done his."

But though the war was—and still is, at the present writing—the dominant note, it was made to serve a vivifying purpose in teaching subjects usually far removed from its destructive activities: civics, for instance. The children were easily made to see that a town councilor, a mayor, any one of their so often pursy and self-conscious officials of the days of peace, was really a man inside his official skin, a stalwart guardian spirit for all his tubbiness and red nose, an inchoate hero instead of a mere political jobster. Little Burgomaster Max, of Brussels, with his wiry beard and gimlet eyes, was a favorite illustration of the civilian whose patriotism and knowledge of his responsibility gave him courage to defy the armed German swaggerer and bully.

The children were not permitted to forget the State; and the State, on its part, did not forget its children. Whenever it was possible, the young *mobilisés* were given permission, literally between actions, to return to their schools to be ex-

amined and graduated. On June 30, 1915, the Dean of the Faculty of Nancy received a letter from an anxious father:

"I am sending you my son, who came this morning from the trenches, where he has passed a terrible week, which prevented him from preparing properly for the examinations. Please put him through at the earliest possible moment, so that he will not have to remain away from the squad he commands any longer than absolutely necessary."

The young Sergeant returned to his post the fifth of July. Two days afterward the Dean received another note from the father:

"Many thanks for having passed my dear son so quickly. At six o'clock this evening he was killed at Bois-le-Pretre."

So died, on July 6, 1915, Sergeant Marcel Ferrette, aged eighteen, Bachelor-of-Arts-to-be.

Of course, the spectacular thing all through this war has been the schools scattered along the different fighting fronts, sometimes within a mile of the advanced trenches. The teaching went steadily on with the shells and bullets finding their billets in the schoolhouses themselves. Only a great epic could paint the picture in its truly heroic colors. In the Marne a group of children, during one examination, was entirely wiped out by a sudden rain of shells. At Saint-Dié the Rector suspended the Young Women's College one afternoon, and the next, at the hour when the girls usually left the building, a shell burst in the front door and practically demolished the structure. A school

in the Meuse, still open, was smashed into fragments—fortunately on Sunday—but one teacher was killed. A girl teacher at Paissy (Aisne) kept her little school in a cave, where she was surprised by a bombardment. Grouping her children behind her, for an hour she closed the entrance against the explosions and bits of shell with her own body. Amazingly enough, she was not even scratched, they say, though some of the ragged shell-splinters flew past her and buried themselves in the children's benches.

Only seven secondary schools were closed along the front line: Arras, Soissons, Saint-Dié, Pont-à-Mousson, Sainte Menéhoulde, Verdun and Reims. It seemed like giving a victory to the enemy to close them, and it was not done until the teachers themselves granted it was dangerous to keep them open another moment. *Dangerous!* Béthune, for instance, during the eighteen months following the declaration of war, was bombarded no less than fifty-eight times, yet the schools went right on.

"I won't leave my school until it threatens to fall on my head!" "I will stay at my post until the shells drive me out!" "I am only a woman, but the shells won't hurt me any more than they do the men!" These are mere examples of the attitude most of the teachers took, many of them not only going daily through perilous zones to their schools, but also shepherding their pupils back and forth.

Most picturesque of all were the schools in the champagne caves of Reims. In October of 1914 it was impossible to open schools in the city because violent bombard-

ments were an almost daily occurrence. In December a young woman teacher came to Monsieur Octave Forsant, the local inspector, and suggested opening a *garderie* (day-nursery) down in the champagne caves to take care of the littler children, and keep them out of both mischief and danger. The scheme worked so well that M. Forsant was glad to see it develop into a number of regular schools. The Mumm Cave had the honor of receiving the first, which was named the École Joffre. Others followed, two of them named respectively for King Albert I of Belgium and for General Dubail.

In one of his reports M. Forsant said: "What a spectacle revealed itself as I first went through these caves! Belgian refugees and children of France were mixed together in them side by side with soldiers. Many of the unlucky people of the Ardennes, come down from Mézières and Réthel, and those Rémois who had temporarily left their bombarded houses, had crammed themselves in with the school children. They had brought their beds, their cooking stoves, their lamps, lanterns and candles. Sweat and smoke mingled with the smells of cooking and the steamy effluvia arising from drying clothes. An acrid odor took one by the throat. The women, for the most part badly coiffed and half-dressed, with children clinging to their skirts, came and went through these vast corridors, happy indeed to have found any asylum from the storm of steel raging overhead. In such a place, so little suited to educational purposes, I hesitated long before agreeing to open schools. But

it had to be done, and on January 22 (1915), wishing not only to ameliorate the condition of the children, but to relieve their parents also, I opened the Joffre School."*

The calm of the children, during even the most violent bombardment, was astonishing. They seemed no more afraid, even with shells bursting directly overhead, and the town itself falling to pieces or burning up, than did the devoted teachers, who considered their personal danger a small thing compared with their opportunity to render a service to France as precious as it was far beyond the usual. In 1916 there were thirty-six teachers in these cave schools of Reims alone, handling a total enrolment of five hundred children. On July seventh of the same year, out of one hundred and twenty-five children registered for the examination for a certificate (the equivalent of a grammar-school certificate), one hundred and twenty-three were present. The year before there were only thirty-five!

The little Rémois continued in the cave schools until March 30, 1917. They had more attention paid to them than perhaps any others in France. Correspondents visited them, ladies brought them bonbons, the great champagne houses who had offered them the hospitality of their caves, adopted them, and each year gave them Christmas trees and "movie" shows. Their crowning entertainment came on January 28, 1917, when, after a violent bombardment in the morning, one of the Army's cinematograph operators

*My translation: M. Forsant's report in the *Révue des Deux Mondes*, September, 1917.

made a remarkable film of the children at their underground play, of a gas-mask drill, of a drill to evacuate the school, and of the women teachers guiding their charges back to their homes, through streets in which the shells were still falling.

In keeping the educational traditions of France alive during these stormy days, the work of the schools was only begun. Much that has been accomplished in aid of the soldiers could not possibly have been done without the work of these intense, patriotic school boys and girls. Some of them adopted soldiers and wrote to them regularly. Some paid for educating penniless orphans. Here a class adopted an orphaned girl, and saved up religiously so as to give its charge a chance at future happiness by providing her eventually with the indispensable *dot* or marriage portion. There a school adopted a whole regiment, and sent it everything needed, from tarred boots to safety-pins. And some adopted wounded *poilus,* caring for them with the tenderness of the little brother for the big. Many a school, too, raised funds for the wounded, each child giving its pittance proudly and regularly. Others helped by forming innumerable "Bands" or Societies each named for its chosen work like the "*Oeuvre* (Work) of the Weekly Egg," in which each member provided an egg a week for the hospitals; the "Work of the Pocket-Money"; the "Work of the Two Vegetables;" and in various parts of the country the children gathered and stored the "Seeds of Autumn" in preparation for the spring planting.

Of what was done this side of the front we have ample details in the Government reports, but only scraps of news filtered through that grim gray German line which still snakes its ugly length all the way across north France. Bit by bit an idea of the makeshifts and heroisms of the teachers of Longwy, Roubaix, Turcoing, Douai and other towns can be pieced together. Here the Germans detained the women teachers because they were accomplishing much good for their townsfolk! What the real reason was may be only too clearly revealed if the melancholy list of Germany's diabolisms is ever compiled. In other towns the women teachers were ordered out as *bouche inutile* (useless mouths)—consumers of valuable food. To the last woman they refused to go, clinging to their schools heroically in the face of almost certain abuse. Many a school in these invaded towns was taught almost in whispers; taught the French language, literature, history, tradition, with a fervor, as a French writer puts it, "which resembled the fervor usually reserved for the sacred texts. And the children performed their duties as if they were consecrating themselves by acts of faith"—as indeed they were!

French temperament and heroism were no less in continual evidence in the prison camps in Germany itself. The author of *L'École et la Guerre,* himself a Professor, relates that at grim old Saxon Zwickau, where many civilians have been imprisoned, two women teachers from the Ardennes found themselves among seventy child prisoners ranging from three to fourteen years of age. What could they do,

Verdun. Classroom in a primary school in the Cathedral quarters

Reims. School children on the Street of the Martyrs

A sight of the ruins at Nauvrone Vingré—Aisne

Once the main street of the village Craoune—Aisne

in a prison camp? First of all, they braved the commandant, and wrung from him an unwilling permission to establish a school. Somehow they discovered a few books. A German petty officer, in peace time a teacher of French, got them three grammars. A bit of linoleum served as a blackboard, and each child was provided by some hook or crook with a slate and a bit of chalk. In other camps of civilians, similar efforts were made, and the teachers even went so far in some as to establish debating societies for themselves of the sort they had enjoyed at home. Nobody but the French—or perhaps Americans!—would have had the spirit in such surroundings to argue profoundly "the best way to insure a large school attendance"!

What a different, and how much cheerier, tale Alsace tells! Not much of it is French even yet, after nearly four years of struggle; but what there is is mightily encouraging, and the day when the tricolor displaced the hated red, white and black was a gala day indeed. School opened first in Massevaux, a charming little old-world backwater which was still lulled by the distant growling of the guns behind the mountain when I visited it last September. I talked with adults and children alike all over the repatriated section. The adults were still shy, reserved, not sure of themselves; unable to realize as yet that they might speak the tongue of their infancy without having a brutal *Wachtmeister* throw them into jail or beat them over the head with the flat of his saber. Though the older children sometimes lapsed into the gutturals of their long-hated

masters, the natural resiliency of youth generally made them forgetful of even the immediate past, and enabled them to revel in their present freedom. But to the littler children, born shortly before or since the war began, French is the native tongue, and they speak it easily, if in a somewhat rough and colloquial way. I was informed that already there are five thousand pupils in the new Alsatian schools, with more than a hundred teachers of both sexes.

The graduation exercises for several towns of the vicinity, held at Rougemont-le-Château, near Belfort, in 1915, were exceedingly interesting. The graduating class was required to write an essay in French—"Describe your own town, and state why your little country is so dear to the heart of every Frenchman." The judges included the venerable Rector of Besançon, a Professor from Paris, a member of the Superior Council of Public Instruction, local teachers and soldier-teachers. At times with tears blinding their eyes as effectually as any *boche* gas-shells, they passed upon the sixteen papers turned in—and solemnly filed them as "historic documents" in the Museum of Pædagogy!

Here, too, in Alsace, the children are doing work besides their lessons. In Massevaux I copied a poster displayed all over the village, addressed *"Aux Enfants des Écoles*—To the Children of the Schools," a free translation of which runs: "The Army needs comfort this winter. Gather faggots everywhere, dry them carefully, and bring them in

five-kilogram bundles to the authorities the fourteenth and twenty-ninth of each month, and you will contribute to the national defense."

Not all the mobilized teachers were given the opportunity to display their heroism on the actual front or in the prison camps. Many of them, as need arose, became foresters, bill-posters, public printers, soup-kitchen directors, managers of bakeries, laundries and post-offices; in fact, there was little they did not do. The diary of one such a teacher tells a vivid story of his patriotic busy-ness: 5-8 A. M., work at the Town Hall, listening to public complaints, issuing passes, permits, etc.; 8-9 A. M., report to and consultation with the Mayor; 9-12 noon, same as from 5 to 8 A. M., with the addition of visits to near-by towns to help there in the same way; noon to 1 P. M., luncheon and rest; 1-3 P. M., same as morning; 4-5 P. M., distribution of materials to the bakers' workers.

"Between times," he wrote, "I help at the telephone switchboard, act as an assistant guard, copy official dispatches, check over the accounts of the bakery, sign a perfect raft of papers by the Mayor's orders, and keep so generally occupied that my day ends, as a usual thing, between ten and eleven at night." No wonder an Inspector said of teachers like these: "They, too, have made a campaign!"

The story of quiet, unassuming, heroic accomplishments I have tried to tell has a special interest for America. Our relations with France have always been not only friendly but intimate. And to-day we stand with the French in

Europe as Lafayette and Rochambeau once stood with us in America. And on our part we can learn the lesson of their war-time schools, with all it means of entire consecration and invincible self-abnegation under more dreadful conditions than humanity has ever seen before; though, if "God still reigns" and protects these United States, as they have been providentially protected in all their marvelous progress of a hundred and forty-two years, it will never be necessary for us to inscribe upon the diplomas of any of our school boys or girls anything like the lines that appeared upon each diploma presented at Reims in 1915:

*"The student, ———, by his work and his faithfulness in following the courses, notwithstanding the danger and difficulty of the circumstances, merits this recompense.*

*In a Champagne Cave*
*The 332d Day of Bombardment*
*31st July, 1915."*

## CHAPTER XIV

### IN THE BLUE ALSATIAN MOUNTAINS

Olympus rises of necessity from the lowlands; heaven is heaven only because of hell. Alsace the lovely, the picturesque; the sweet and placid country the French have been so earnestly trying to win back without laying waste, is all the lovelier by comparison with that melancholy district north of Paris where hate had its unbridled way.

"Do you know Alsace at all?" inquired Monsieur Zhée, of the Press Bureau of the Foreign Office, as he leaned back in his chair and regarded me thoughtfully a moment.

I acknowledged that my wanderings had never taken me through the Vosges and the exquisite land of the *"enfants perdus"*—the "lost children"—who have been mourned steadfastly for all those barren years between the forced treaty of 1871 and the wild, mad dash that carried the French back into a part of their own in 1914, at the very beginning of the war. Now I was to see this thorn in the heart of France and the flank of Germany; and I was unprepared. My Foreign Office friend began pulling books from his office shelves.

"You must read up carefully before you go," he declared, piling me with paper-bound volumes. "It will be useless

for you to see what you do not understand. You can not understand the feeling we cherish for Alsace unless you know her history. This"—he handed me a bulky volume dealing with *L'Alsace a travers les Ages* (Alsace throughout the Ages)—"will give you a general idea of Alsatian history and feeling; and these others"—heaping up half a dozen or more books and pamphlets dealing with every phase of the vexed question—"will help to give you some notion of the country and its people."

And I was expected to chew, swallow and digest all this between three P. M. and eight A. M. next day!

What an amazing people the French are! Here was a tremendously hard-worked, tired-out official of the Foreign Office, still so thoroughly Gallic at heart, despite years of residence in the United States, that he could not bear think an American—of whom he knew nothing and for whom he had no reason to care—should go ignorantly into Alsace, and perhaps bring away a wrong or an indefinite impression. As Professor of French in a great American University, Monsieur Zhée—*camouflage* for the first letter of his name, if you must have the reason for his apparently extraordinary appellation!—had been the teacher, friend and humorous critic of unnumbered classes of Americans. He had heard France call across the seas, and though he was well beyond the military age, responded immediately.

"Did you get into the trenches yourself?" I inquired, as we chatted intimately in his little office, where newspapers

and periodicals—he was one of the censors—lay by the hundreds.

He laughed. "Indeed I did! Perhaps they thought me too near-sighted to shoot well. Maybe they thought the exercise would do me good. Anyway, they kept me doing nothing but digging ditches for eighteen months. Phew!" he murmured, reminiscently, and glanced at his hands, as if he would conjure back the blisters and callouses that unaccustomed ditch-digging had earned him.

In a moment he was on the Alsatian theme again. With true Gallic sympathy and deftness he sketched the country and its beauty, drew me a vivid silhouette of its tragic story, hinted at the problems I should find visible there, saw to it by adroit questions and suggestions that I drew correct inferences; and then he was off like a swallow to a little history of the retired cavalry officer in whose company three of us—an Italian, another American and myself—were to explore the unknown. The pressure of routine work ahead of him made no difference. On his desk a tremendous heap of unopened mail clamored for attention—"Yes, I shall be here this evening. One can read so much more quietly at night," was all he said, when I suggested that his time was valuable, and staggered out under the burden of my newly acquired but as yet unassimilated knowledge of Alsace in ten volumes.

I thought of Monsieur Zhée as I pored over those books, and began to understand the demonstration that had taken

place in the vast Place de la Concorde in Paris. It is stale history now, of course; most probably it has been forgotten. But every one who has been there remembers the fine statue of the City of Strasbourg, the mourning draperies and wreaths of immortelles that covered it for no less than forty-three years. France was sharply criticized for that furious rush into Mulhouse and the attempt to recover Alsace at a single stroke just at the beginning of the war. It seemed a proof of volatility and sentiment which could not possibly accomplish anything against the material sufficiency of Germany. In reality it was a case of the Sabbath-day rescuing of the sheep in the pit. The tumultuous acclaim and frenzy of the Parisians when they swarmed into the Place, tore down the mourning streamers and immortelles from Strasbourg's statue, and replaced them amid shouts and tears with the tricolor and brilliant living flowers, voiced the profoundest sentiment in the national heart. It was no mere hotspur act of revenge upon Germany for her brigandage of 1871. It was the only thing, the patriotic thing, the honorable thing, to strive to give back to Alsace the nationality she had claimed and loved for more than two hundred years. So the French could not have done anything else than invade impetuously, even though they were immediately driven out of most of what they had taken. The joy over the little section set free from the hated German yoke was enough to fire the whole country, to give to its efforts to win more, to win all, that amazing steadfastness of purpose and unconquerable fight-

ing power that has astounded not only the Germans but every one else.

Dolleren, Oberbruch, Niederbruch, Weegschied, Bitschweiler—the trip seems like a dream, impossible in France with those names! Yet before me lies the black and white record of every mile of it in my notes, from the damp, gloomy, fog-brushed morning when I walked half-way from my hotel to the railroad station trying to find a taxi, to the night when we returned, and emerged from the cavernous black shadows into the crowded Paris streets.

First came the long railway journey from Paris eastward across the loveliest part of central France. The train was more than half filled by men in uniform, the station platforms gray with "horizon blue" that gathered thickest below the square white flag with the red cross that, at each large station, hung outside the doorway to its little emergency hospital, whose lone nurse would swing along the running-board of the cars, jingling cup in hand, and beg with a fetching smile for the *"Croix Rouge et nos blessés."* On the way down to Belfort I dropped a franc in one such cup, and was rewarded with a smiling *"Merci, mon Colonel Americain!"* though I wore no uniform. On the way back, the same cup received a five-franc note—I could not afford to remain a mere Colonel!—and this time the response was warmer still—*"Merci! Merci mille fois, mon Genéral!"* The Italian correspondent, a former Lieutenant in Italy's heroic Army, incapacitated for further military duty and now serving a string of Milanese newspapers, regarded the

five *sous* in his hand sourly as the smiling cup approached him, dropped them in, and snapped at me in Italian: *"Generale! Per bacco, coi miei cinque soldi, non sono più che caporale!* (*General!* By Jove, with my five cents, I'm only a Corporal!)" Yet he was a good fellow, his outburst *camouflage* to cover his regretful inability to give more generously.

The American grinned at me and suggested: "Give her five more, and she'll make you a Field Marshal or an Ambassador!"

We sped past Mélun and Troyes, Chaumont and Vésoul, through that rich vine country where even the black and fetid breath of war has not been able to dim the beauty or halt the industry that gives the region its charm. As we came into the broad plateau where Belfort lies, swept about by fields glowing with the tan of summer, we caught glimpses here and there of Fritz's activities—*"souvenirs du boche,"* our Captain smiled: a stable with its slate roof shattered by a bomb, the smeared black ruin of what had been a farmhouse, or a haystack no longer a haystack but a brittle ash-pile.

France is both very considerate of and generous with her official guests. The motor cars at our service were handsome limousines painted the conventional blue-gray, not at all adapted for the hard mountain-climbing we were to do, but vastly more comfortable than any touring car could be in those chilly Vosges heights. Posted prominently inside each car, and fastened also to the dash, where the driver

could not but see it, was a sign which ordained the speed by both day and night, prescribed certain other rules regarding lights and roads, and ended with a warning to "conserve the essence." Our silent soldier-drivers obeyed, too, and though the road out of Belfort ribboned away flat and straight, with hardly any traffic at all to impede a fast run, they held to the twenty-five-mile pace allowed all the way up to Massevaux.

It was a supremely lovely ride in the waning afternoon. The road was white and smooth, despite the traffic of war that daily rolled over it. The gaunt old poplars bordering it on either hand, the brilliantly green or golden fields, the gradually increasing altitude and consequently changing scenery as we climbed the Vosges foothills, gave a variety and charm that made it hard to imagine ourselves directly back of the front. The farm wagons on the road clung to the center of the way with all their old peace-time persistence, and their peasant drivers eyed us with the familiar old hostility of injured selfishness as we passed—and repaid their glare with a choking cloud of white dust!

Giromany the quaint came first, and we felt ourselves no longer in France, but in some elfin land where everything was small. The houses bore the mark of French inspiration in their dully gleaming red tiled roofs, and the flowers that clambered over façade or side, dripped from the weather-fringed eaves, and caroused gaily up outbuildings and over stone walls; yet all had a curious tang and personality of their own, especially in their snubby gable-ends. Wide-

spreading shade-trees stretched their protecting arms across the dooryards, and sunny-headed children stared at us or called to their busy mothers in a queer, guttural patois we could not understand.

Nothing but a catalogue of rural beauties and mountain scenery could describe that ride as the road swung to the northeast up the valley of the Rose Montoise to Rièrevescemont, which nestled picturesquely at the top. Then the valley, broader, nobler, steeper, of a small affluent of the river Doller, to Sewen, a lovely old Alsatian hamlet spraddled across a brawling green stream. Some of its walls are bullet-marked; here and there flame has left its black smudge. But how peaceful it was in that summer sunset, with its black-capped old women gossiping beside their front doors, its children playing about beside the little river and in the streets, and a couple of Missouri mules solemnly approving it all from a mound where they took in the view with placid eyes and occasionally wagging ears as they munched their evening hay.

Captain A—— stopped the machines for a stroll through the village. The sight of two civilians and the gray of Signor S——'s Italian uniform, stained with his six months of fighting, drew attention immediately. The children gathered about us frankly curious; their elders, no less curious but not so frank, hung back a little. Staff cars did not often stop in Sewen without a reason, and the town is too close to the front not to be cautious and have a very lively memory. But our Captain should have been an

ambassador. In three minutes he had the children clinging to him and shouting, and the old folks crowded up close, telling him all about their simple lives.

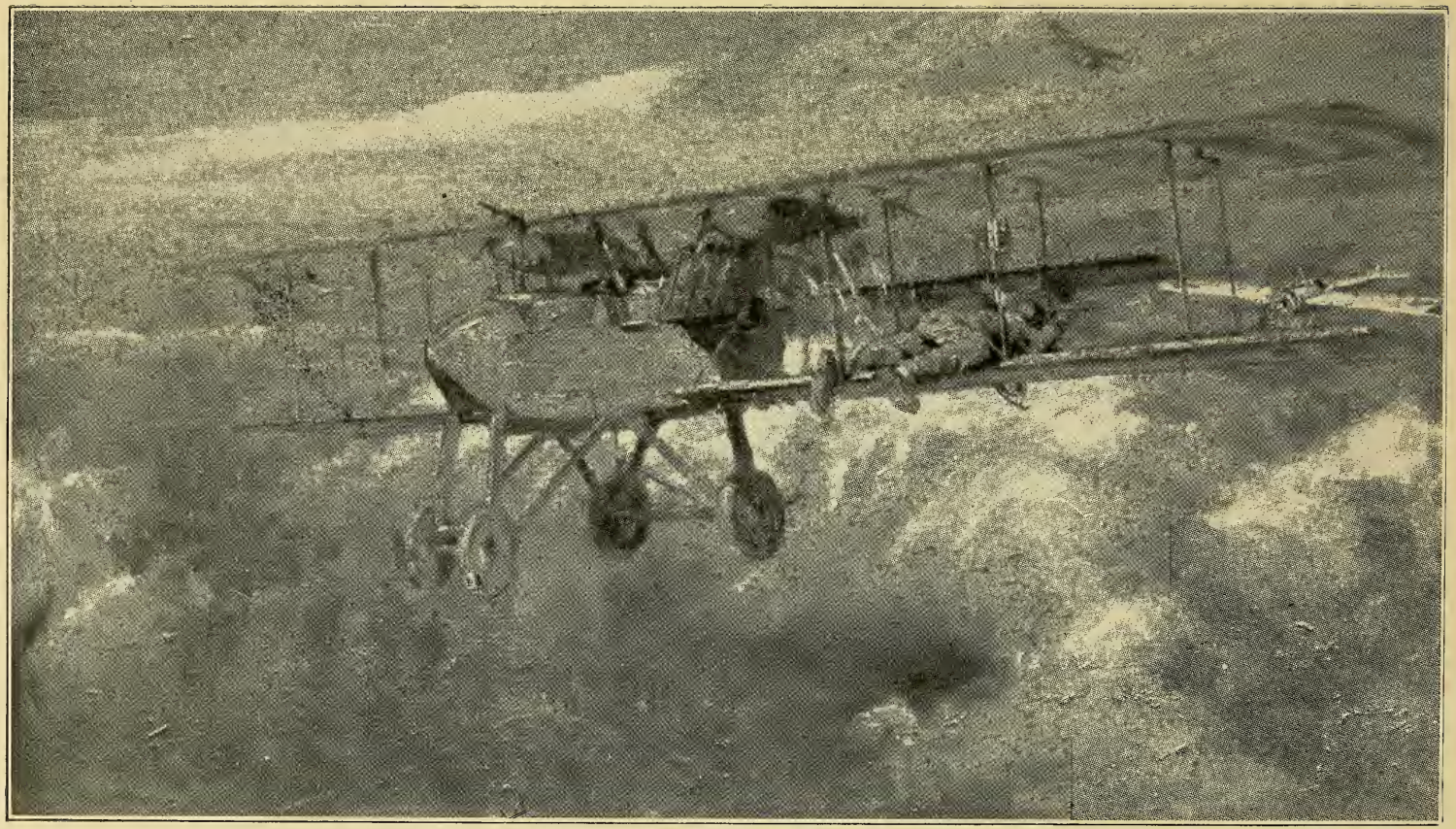
As we turned back toward our cars, loath to leave such a placid beauty spot, a very feeble old man, tottering along on a thick cane, straightened himself as well as he could, saluted with old-time precision, and smiled at us. Captain A—— returned the courtesy with fine dignity. In the old man's buttonhole was the green and black ribbon of '70. A veteran! Yes, he admitted, he was of the *—th Hussards,* and what a hardship that he could not fight now! Those *boches*—ah! If he were only thirty years younger! But he had given four sons; that was something, of course, but somehow the youngsters did not seem to have the spirit we used to have in 'seventy, when a fight was a real fight, and men could see one another. Nowadays —bah! He waxed passionate as he talked, forgot his age and used his stick in fiery gestures instead of leaning on it. We listened closely, but without understanding his thick speech—he would bitterly have resented being told he had acquired quite a Teutonic accent in his forty-three years of angry captivity!—when he proudly flung out his cane toward an exceedingly disreputable tricolor that seemed to mourn its disrepute from a near-by window.

Captain A—— shot out his wrist and glanced at his watch. "We must be off," he said, in his crisp Oxford English, shook hands with the veteran, and waved us toward the cars, with a smile so misty we knew something was com-

ing. As he halted beside the nearer one, he pointed back to the veteran, who stood watching us from the other side of the stream.

"You saw the flag—the dirty old flag of France? *Parbleu!* He—that old fellow—saved it from capture in 1870. He hid it. He sewed it inside his mattress. He slept on it for more than forty-three years. When we took the town, he ripped open the mattress and flung it out to welcome us in!" The Captain muttered something under his breath that would have been pious profanity in English, and looked away an instant. When he turned back to us he said: "That is only one. There are scores of them —hundreds! Hidden forty years from German spies and treachery under floors, in mattresses, buried, everywhere—every one of them only waiting! Waiting! Get in, gentlemen; get in. *En avant, mes enfants!*" he added to the drivers.

Up through Dolleren the green and quiet, through Oberbruch, where the bridge over the mountain rivulet quivered and rattled ominously as we rolled slowly across, past Weegschied and Kirschberg and Niederbruch we climbed through the gathering gloom, half seeing, half imagining the veiled charm of each peaceful hamlet, coming at last to prosperous, happy Massevaux, or, as the Alsatians call it, Masemünster. The cars halted in a big, earth-floored square full of broad-branched plane trees, and Captain A—— took us up into the administration building to meet the genial Major-Mayor, himself an Alsatian born, and looking



From a painting by Henry Farré

Aviator Bregnet Michelin being wounded, the sharpshooter stretches out on the lower plane in order to fight the more easily

more like a German, with his bright blond hair and ruddy complexion, than like a Gaul. But he was French to the core, gifted with the keen logic, the ready humor, the irresistible spirit of his race. We must dine with him and his staff in an hour at Headquarters, and meantime, Captain A—— must see that we were comfortably domiciled.

"Well," remarked our American companion as we came down the broad oaken stair three abreast, "if this is war, I'm for it all the time!"

The Italian looked inquiringly at me, and I interpreted. He shrugged. "War is always like that with the French," he observed a little bitterly. "In Italy, once the Staff passes you as properly accredited, you go where you please, when you please. You see the real thing. You can charge with the men, if you can persuade them to let you. I have been with them in the trenches as an officer, and I have been with them in charges as a correspondent. This is very poor amusement. I want to see a fight. We might be Cook tourists!"

Poor Signor S——! His wound, the privations the Italian Army has suffered, the poverty and desperateness of the Italian situation, had no doubt burnt into his soul until he was hardly responsible for his ungracious attitude throughout the trip. We Americans also wanted to see a fight, but we had no especial wish to bring anxiety to our courteous guide and protector by drawing the fire of the enemy. And half an hour of solid creature comforts made a distinct, though only a momentary, change in Signor S——'s mood.

As we met for dinner, he was beaming with satisfaction over his luxurious quarters and the kindness of his hostess.

"You two American gentlemen will naturally wish to be together," Captain A—— said as we left the administration building, "so I will take you up the road a little way to a very comfortable place where I am sure you will be welcome and contented."

"Welcome and contented" in war time on the very fringe of the conflict! It was an exceedingly comfortable country home, built strongly of red brick and set back fifty yards from the road in a pretty little park of shrubs and flowers, with winding paths and a porter's lodge smothered in vines and roses. As we came up the steps, the doors swung open, and a trim Alsatian maid apologized profusely in perfect French for Madame's absence. If we would be so kind as to select our rooms, and permit her the honor of carrying up our grips—.

We took a suite on the second floor overlooking the gardens and the valley, hedged in by the blue Vosges hills, about whose flanks clung the faint bluish-gray mists of early evening. The rooms were huge, with lofty ceilings and tall, shuttered windows through which we could step out upon little balconies and look off down the halcyon vale. Between the two bedrooms was a washroom with massive new twin basins and furniture such as one sees in the older hotels here where bulky apparatus is no objection. Everything was clearly of German make—and hanging on the clothes-racks were several handsome German uniforms

bearing a Major's insignia. Was the lord of the manor *boche?* If he were, why had he left his uniforms behind? Why was his wife accommodating the French Army by housing its visitors so handsomely? We went to the banquet sorely puzzled.

Headquarters House was another such structure as the one where we were quartered, with a big paneled dining-room where about twenty of us sat down to a royal feast. It was not that the dinner was so extraordinarily elaborate as that the cooking was perfection, the wines excellent, the taste epicurean. My place was between the Major-Mayor, who is not only commanding officer of the troops, but civil administrator and judge of the district, and a charming young Blue Devil. There were other Blue Devils, or *Chasseurs Alpins*—those amazing mountain riflemen who are inured to every hardship and who wear as their proud insignia the rakish, slouching *béret* instead of the regular Army *képi*—artillery both heavy and light, Staff, infantry and engineers around that table. The small talk waxed fast and furious of everything under the sun but the war. It might have been a private dinner at the Ritz-Carleton in either New York or London. Music, art, poetry, the ethics of insisting that a West Point cadet should learn to dance to make him able to handle balky soldiers, the age of a certain ogival window in the town hall, President Wilson's sense of humor! They all came in for lively discussion, and I lamented the inability of the French language to render the delightful slang of the limerick the President

is said to have quoted with hearty appreciation. But how could the ablest French scholar Gallicize *"It's the folks out in front that I jar?"*

Only when the Major-Mayor and I fell to discussing Alsace did the banter cease, and the big table listen as the commander warmed to his favorite theme. In crisp, brilliant French, his face flushing with his earnestness and his eyes two lambent flames, he swept the dishes from before him impatiently, and built an Alsace out of nutshells and crumbs and wine glasses, explaining, criticizing, lecturing. Our Staff Captain leaned forward in his place across the table and listened like a schoolboy hearing *Gunga Din* for the first time.

*"Mon Dieu*—the stupidity of the *boche!"* cried the Major-Mayor, demolishing a nutshell mountain that had represented Hartmannsweilerkopf an instant before. "Bah! To declare this stupid war and risk his national life! In ten, perhaps at the most, twenty years, he would have owned the world. His commerce was everywhere. He knew everything. His gold was buying him everything. Nobody was awake. Nothing could have stopped him if he had only been satisfied to go on in the same way. When we awoke, we should all have been his slaves—France, England, Italy, Russia. Yes, America, too, Monsieur. Your country suffers from the *boche* plague even yet! But he was born with the sword in his hand. He loved its rattle in the scabbard. He had to use it. He could not wait. Madness seized him for blood. He must drink it,

bathe in it, wallow in it. So he struck—and lost everything—but blood. He has had that. *Mon Dieu,* he has had that!"

A growl ran around the table. "So have we, *mon Commandant!*" exploded a pale, thin little *Chasseur*—the hardiest and most daring of them all, I learned afterward.

Another growl answered him, but the Major-Mayor waved it down. "We have," he assented gravely. "But Alsace is worth it. I speak to you, Monsieur," he went on, turning directly to me, "not only as an Alsatian but as a Frenchman. You know a little of our tiny country. You have seen and will see more of its beauty and its wealth. Perhaps you know enough of its dark story to understand why we Alsatians love it, and why, also, we love France. France never stole us from Germany, because there was no Germany in Louis XIV's time to steal us from! She got us by treaty from the House of Austria in 1648. But that was a long time ago. We learned to love the French character, the French spirit. It struck a responsive chord in our hearts. *Voilà*—we became French—more French than the Frenchman! Is it not so, gentlemen?"

The table chorused thunderous approval of his rendering of history. "So!" continued the Major-Mayor, making a heap of his built-up crumbs and shells again and pouring them into his champagne glass. "When we drive Germany out of Alsace, we are not stealing territory. *Mon Dieu*—we are simply forcing a thief to disgorge what he had stolen from France in 1871! Germany has tried to deceive

France and the world with nonsense about Alsace. She has tried to deceive us Alsatians again and again. Wasted effort! We obeyed her because behind her orders were prison and death at the most, and petty martyrdom at the very least. But think you Germany by harsh measures, by stupidity, by coercion and brutalities, could change in forty years the sentiments that had been growing for more than two centuries?"

"But, Major, what about the plebiscite? Would not that decide once and forever whether Alsace is really French? What fairer way could there be than letting the Alsatians themselves say whether they wish to be a German crown-land or whatever it may be, or French?"

To a man the officers reproved me with one short, definite glance; then each one looked back at his plate or at his opposite. Only the Major-Mayor smiled.

"Ah, Monsieur, you test me. No way could be fairer if Germany would let the Alsatians decide. But the plebiscite! *Mon Dieu,* Monsieur, no plebiscite is possible! There are 250,000 Alsatians who have been forced into the *boche* armies; 250,000 more are no longer Alsations because they have fled to France and are now Frenchmen. There are half a million votes disqualified at once. And don't forget that 400,000 Germans have been worked into Alsace as immigrants. Even supposing Germany herself meant well, do you suppose those individual Germans could fail to intimidate the Alsatians? Do you suppose that an honest vote would be possible? Remember the wealth of

Alsace-Lorraine: the timber and phosphate here; the tremendous mineral riches of Lorraine. Germany will never give up this wealth until she is forced to at the point of the sword! What she stole, she will hold. It is for us to beat her to her knees and make her let go. And," he summed up triumphantly, bringing his clenched fist down until the glasses leaped with his fervor, "when we win back the iron mines of Lorraine, the *boche* can never make war on this scale again because he will not have the resources for making guns where he must have them—inside his own borders!"

We had our coffee and liqueurs in the adjoining salon, and the talk drifted into less pleasant channels. A Captain beside me was glancing idly over a German photograph album filled with heavy Teutonic children, and blubbery personages full of beer and wind and whisker. "Fancy!" he startled me by saying in perfect English. "We French have not hurt one thing in this house, though it was owned by Germans. We even look over their photograph albums with smiles, and keep the wretched piano tuned. We are so simple, so droll. The *boche* does more cunning things."

"Cunning things?" the Major-Mayor repeated slowly, his face darkening. "I do not speak much English, but enough to know what you mean. I should not call them cunning. . . ."

The Captain laughed. It was a laugh that made me shiver. His handsome face contorted into a smile that drew up his lips at the corners and showed the strong white

teeth, but his eyes smoldered like the spark at the end of a burning fuse.

"But, my Major," he protested, dropping into liquid French, "they are so *chic*. Their sense of humor is so fine! You remember the house at R——, where the officers had their dinner, and after they finished smashed everything in the place but the dishes on the table, and the eighteen or twenty wine glasses they used as latrines and set in a row on the mantelpiece for us to find? *Dieu!*"

The Major-Mayor's florid face was purple. He nodded slowly, his hands clenching and unclenching as he murmured, so softly I could hardly hear him: *"Oui, oui—chic!"* Across the room his eye caught the glance of an infantry Captain and summoned him over. *"Mon vieux,* have you the pictures of that Lieutenant H—— who was shot near Mulhouse? The one who had the big pocket-book?"

"Not here, my Major," was the answer. "I am sorry, if you want them. I sent them to Paris. . . ."

"Never mind," his superior replied; and to me: "The *chic boche*—I am sorry you could not have been with us when we found him. He was a brave fellow, and when he was shot in a skirmish, Captain, here, examined his body to remove the identity disc and his papers, to send them to his family. In his breast pocket was a great wallet, almost a portfolio. In one side of it he had letters from his wife and children, pictures of them; beautiful letters full of love and tenderness; beautiful pictures; an unfinished let-

ter he had been writing to his wife—a good letter, too. In the other he had gathered a collection of the most obscene verses and photographs imaginable. There they were, face to face, over his heart. And he went into action, knowing he might be shot, and those things found on his dead body! Ah, *ces chic boches!*"

By this time half the room had gathered around us, and our Staff Captain murmured a suggestion into the Major-Mayor's scarlet ear. He hesitated, looked at us foreigners —assented. To a splendid young *Chasseur* Lieutenant he made a signal. The young man, already scowling with his memory, looked doubly fierce as the words poured forth in a torrent. He, at least, had no hesitancy in telling the world what horror he had seen, what helpless shame. He spoke directly to us Americans, swiftly, in low, earnest tones, acting his story as he told it with strong gestures and expressions, his voice penetrating our very souls with its clear, vibrant emotion.

"It is not much—only one of hundreds of such cases, no doubt, but I saw it, and I had the satisfaction of playing executioner. Only, *mon Dieu,* I was too late to save the poor child. . . .!

"The *boche* had captured a hamlet. On its outskirts stood a comfortable bourgeois home. It was the type you know so well—square—four rooms on the ground floor—a central hallway, two rooms to right, two to left. The dining-room was in front. It was night. We crept up on it, choked the videttes and sent them to the rear. I called my

men together again. We stole up closer. The windows had not been shaded. We could look straight into the dining-room.

"Tied in their chairs sat the father and mother, one at each end of the room. A German soldier with fixed bayonet stood at each side of the door, looking on and grinning. The *boche* officer had jerked the cloth from the table. Everything lay in a heap on the floor. On the table he had flung the daughter of the house, and he—*mon Dieu!* I shot him there. . . . I could not wait to capture him—!"

## CHAPTER XV

### ALSACE AND ITS PROBLEMS

From my window, opened wide at eleven o'clock, when the banquet was over and I stood in my darkened room still sick at heart, the mountains loomed black and forbidding in the background. They seemed the visible manifestation of Germany's heavy baseness, closing around poor little Alsace in a cold, sinister, unsurmountable barrier. In the sky behind, soft as black velvet, the stars winked and paled intermittently to the flashes of distant guns, whose dull shock came faintly, very faintly, from the other side of the hills, eleven kilometers away. Below me Massevaux was absolutely black and formless, save where some incautious spirit had failed to draw his curtains perfectly, and a chink of light made the surrounding blackness all the more Stygian.

Morning brought us a tremendous, German-style breakfast of ham, sausage, liver and eggs that would have turned the coffee-and-rolls stomach of any Frenchman, and a hasty survey of the town before we resumed our *voyage de luxe sur automobile*. Massevaux is typical of most Alsatian villages, with its central square decorated by a not unpleasing fountain and monument, its signs of inns and shops thrust out at right angles from the walls to silhouette their quaint

figures of rising suns and red bears and white horses against the blue morning sky. The houses are all snub-nosed, the streets mostly narrow and none too light, but well paved and clean. Already the old German signs had been hastily painted out on most of the shops, and their windows displayed the tricolor and the Stars and Stripes everywhere. America may be a name only, but it is certainly a name to conjure with in Alsace. I thought of Signor S——'s dictum about "Cooking it" along the front as we stared like children into the strange shop windows, full of dolls in the Alsatian costume of tight black-laced bodice, white stockings, scarlet skirt and huge black bow for the hair; monstrous German stoves built up of ornamental porcelain plaques, side by side with little sheet-iron "chunk-burners" so flimsy they hardly seemed stoves at all; postcards, patent medicines, gnarly looking fruit; bags of "grains of cereals" and hardware; while from the wet black interiors of the cafés came sounds of scrubbing and splashes of dirty water as the barkeeper-proprietors made ready for the day's trade.

Here and there beside the tricolor hung the scarlet-and-white of Strasbourg, chosen as the Alsatian flag when the province was seized in 1871. If the people had to fly the hated red-white-black of Germany, at least, they insisted, they must have colors all their own; and they did. We found an echo of their enduring spirit in a tiny photograph and postcard shop on the main street. The proprietor, very "*boche*-looking," as he said himself, was overjoyed to see some more Americans. He gave us a voluble

lecture on Alsatian history which would have made the editors of the printed histories rub their eyes, sketched the petty persecutions of the past forty years, and explained that he had had not only to pronounce his name—it was Edouard Bommer—in German fashion—but, for the sake of his growing daughter, had had to be German. If he had not been so careful, "so *boche,*" in a word, the girl would have paid and his business been ruined.

"But now," he cried, slapping my companion so heartily on the shoulder it nearly capsized him into a counter full of dolls and postcards, "we are safe. We are French again! My daughter is in Paris to-day, buying goods for me. *Voilà!*" He fumbled near-sightedly among the picture postcards and presented each of us with the likeness of a pretty young Alsacienne in costume. "This is my *petite,* gentlemen. I beg of you, accept this little souvenir. You may well wish she were here, instead of her stupid old father, to make you welcome to our Alsace."

We accepted the cards, and when I suggested that it was rash to have pictures of his own daughter on sale in public, he grew apoplectic.

"In German days—*mon Dieu, non!* Never such a thing! The first officer who saw would have said just—*'Bring her out!'* But now—did I not say, 'We are French now?' "

As we brought our grips downstairs in the *p'tit château* that had been our very delightful quarters, we wondered again about those German uniforms in the big washroom. Our curiosity was satified with one of those lightning-flash

glimpses into the heart of another that are so startling. Madame proved to be young and charming. She regretted her absence of the previous evening gracefully, and exchanged the usual compliments with her strange and somewhat awkward cavaliers. As we were leaving, my companion ventured a fortunate word of good wishes for Monsieur the absent. Madame's eyes flashed and her hands flew to her breast. She made a pretty picture, framed in the dark oaken doorway, a pot of yellow flowers at her feet and the sun glinting in her golden hair and blue eyes.

"Safe!" she breathed, almost in a whisper. "He is a soldier. I wish him safe, but first I wish him his duty!" She flinched a little under our scrutiny, added more slowly: "If he must die, I hope it is in battle. If only *they* do not catch him!"

There was something so tragic, so pregnant in the pronoun we both jumped. I exclaimed: *"They,* Madame?"

She came a step forward, her blue eyes violet with emotion.

"Did you not know? Did no one tell you of him? Until 1914 he was an officer in the German regiment stationed here, a Major. He had to be; every one had to, to be safe—to keep his home safe. When the war came, he" —she stumbled a little over the ugly word, even though spoken in a good cause—"deserted. He fled to enlist in a French regiment. He was made a Lieutenant only—he, a Major! He is fighting somewhere here, at the front. To die for France is good. But"—those palpitating hands flew

Alsatian girl in native costume

French official photograph

Alsation schoolgirls welcoming a French general and his staff

to her heart again—"if the *boches,* who know him, catch him . . .!"

The ex-Major's case is that of unnumbered thousands of other Alsatians, loyal to the last drop of their blood to their beloved France, but compelled—even more for the safety of their families than themselves—to pretend, during the long night of Teutonic misrule, to be German. The natural consequence, once the French won their way into Alsace, was suspicion everywhere. Who could be sure of anything when the Alsatians freely admitted having posed as German to save themselves? What was there to show that the loyalty and friendship they now offered their French liberators was not mere lip-service, ready to stab the benefactor in the back at the first opportunity? It made a tense and delicate situation which perhaps no nation in the world could handle so adequately as the French. For overt suspicion and hasty condemnation, they substituted suavity and tact; for brutal directness they employed ceaseless vigilance and secret scrutiny. Courtesy and graciousness replaced shouldering and cursing and saber-rattling. Who can doubt the result?

The logical Frenchman knows how easy it is for a man to be nominally loyal, without being sincerely a patriot; how slight a thing can turn such indifferent allegiance into active treason. Here a man whom the French troops had accidentally despoiled of a pig, for example, might continue to be a loyalist if recompensed under the German laws to which he was accustomed, even though the verdict be not

entirely satisfactory; conversely, if his case be decided by a military or even a civil tribunal working under French laws as yet Greek to him, he might turn his back upon France and wish himself once more governed by the very people whose ways he hated. So French rule in Alsace has progressed very cautiously. The courts still use the German law the people understand; the Army officers acting as judges and court officials act not as soldiers, under military regulation, but as civil officials solely. The Army, too, has made it clear to the Alsatians that the reason they are not fighting more furiously and winning back Alsace more quickly, is that they do not wish to smash up the towns more than can be helped. In a word, everything possible is being done, and in the gentlest possible way, to show the ignorant among this timid-fiery, obstinate-easily-led people that France loves them as her favorite children and wishes them only good. And Alsace is responding heartily. French courtesy tinctures the peasant bluntness, and wherever one goes the lifted hat and the cheery greeting speak volumes in themselves, while over the whole region is an atmosphere of contentment and happiness that is a joy to feel.

We parted from Madame and her delightful house with regret—and five minutes later forgot her completely in the beauty of the meadows, sprinkled thick with lavender crocuses. France and Italy have their red bonneted poppies, scarlet spirits of the soil. But in September Alsace has her mantle of almost royal purple, in May her cloth of gold;

the same flowers, but *mirabile dictu!* golden in spring, lavender in the fall. They illuminated the fields for whole acres, seeming to catch and bring to earth something of the smiling skies above them. And then a swift turn, and we rolled past a vast aerodrome where, despite my pleadings, we were not allowed to stop; in fact, the motors speeded a little going by, and we merely caught a fleeting glimpse of the hornets' nest: the great green *hangars,* the broad, flat field, the wicked little fighting planes marshaled in serried rows in the open, ready to take instant wing when the telephone jingled. Silvery white they gleamed in the morning sunshine, with the big red-white-blue circles painted on wings and tail that proclaimed their nationality and saved them from the defending guns.

The air was moist and cool, aromatic with balsam as we flew along the white road winding up into the hills through the ever thickening forests of dark *sapins,* to the point at which the new Route Joffre, constructed since the war began for military purposes, branches away from the old roads and leads into the mountain fastnesses where the guns make music among the whispering trees. And what a road that is, to climb in limousines whose tremendous weight made the engines labor until the radiators boiled over furiously. The car I was in had to stop a dozen times to cool off before taking the next terrific grade!

Like the thing that created it—war—the Route Joffre is mostly red, carved and hewn and built up through clay and shale. Here it mounts in sharp zigzags and hairpin turns

that fairly take one's breath and give even the hardiest of motorists pause. I myself have driven over some very difficult mountain roads in America, but never had I seen a twenty-eight per cent. grade before—with a hairpin turn in it, a sheer precipice on one side, a sheer cliff on the other, and so little space the panting motor had to take half the turn and then risk a fall from the sticky, slippery road by sliding back and slewing as it slid, to negotiate the rest of the turn! That morning Signor S—— and I had a car together. He yawned occasionally, or consulted a bottle of dyspepsia medicine. When I tried to stir his interest, he replied: "I've been over the *teleféricas,* 14,000 feet above nothing. This is just a bad road!" I gave him up after that, and hugged the wonder of it to myself.

The flanks of Stauffen stopped us, the machines backed into a niche hewn from the abrupt face of the cliff, and we started to climb the trail for the "near" front. The cool old forest was damp and quiet, save for the occasional bark of a squirrel or the note of a bird. Ferns and moss underfoot made a soft carpet but hard climbing, and we were glad to emerge at last upon a rocky little grass plot at the brow of the hill, fringed at the edge with enough small trees and shoots to conceal us from the prying German eyes in the plain below. When, however, for the sake of a broader view, we stood for a moment in an oriole-like opening through the forest growth, the artillery observers no doubt telephoned back to their guns within a second or two: "Staff officers and party of three at K 96, section 3,

Stauffen. Two in uniform, two civilians." We moved into cover, and no shells came over in our exact direction; not, as our Staff Captain said, that the *boche* did not wish to kill us, but because he could not trace the fall of his shells accurately for the wood. "Don't imagine he doesn't see you!" he warned, as Signor S—— went back into the open and silhouetted himself clearly against the sky while he studied the panorama below with his binoculars. When he was ready, the Italian came into shelter again, with a significant look to me.

From our height we looked down to the left upon the quaintest and loveliest of old Alsatian mountain towns, Vieux Thann, or Thann the Old, a dark bluish-gray and dull red huddle of roofs and spires lying motionless at the feet of the blue hills. A little farther out, New Thann—held by the *boche*—rubricked the sunny landscape in somewhat brighter colors. Straight before us the plain swept away flat as a Texas prairie for miles. In the foreground was Cerny, the nearest German strongpoint. Empty highroad, and railroad where no locomotive smoked, no cars rattled, shot straight out into the hazy distance, with tall poplars and other slender trees piping them with green. Here and there compact farms, with low, red-tiled houses and walled compounds sentineled by trees and shrubs, dotted the warscape. Yonder a dense grove, well behind the German lines, stood darkly forbidding and mysterious. A hamlet boasting a large insane asylum bulked big in the middle distance. Far off toward the edge of things loomed

the great Forest of Nonnenbruch, and behind that, a low-lying fog-bank that hid Sentheim and Mulhouse, the Rhine and the Black Forest and the Jura itself from even the sharpest eyes. But on days when the atmosphere is clear, the sparkling ribbon of the Rhine looks very close, and the Schwarzwald as black and impressive on its farther bank, under the floating white and indigo crown of the half-imagined mountain, as the fairy tales have always made it.

Cutting this lovely panorama squarely in two from right to left in a series of rough zigzags lay the front, the fire trenches, French and *boche*. Twisty ripples of communication trench meandered off behind from either side; and between the lines, a long, narrow, yellow strip of dead grass and desolation bordered by barbed wire—No Man's Land. Here was a real front, something to stir the imagination, something that looked like war; we could even see down into the rearward of the three lines of French trenches, and with our glasses at times distinguish moving figures. An occasional shell from a six- or eight-inch gun far in the rear, landed somewhere out of our sight with a dull *Plop!* curiously flat and emotionless compared with its eerie shriek as it flew through the air, over the heads of the unconcerned farmers, who calmly raked and stacked their hay directly behind the French lines. "Cool nerve" is a phrase so abused it has long since lost most of its meaning for our sensation-glutted minds. But those sweating Alsatian peasants who gave no heed to the slow bombardment above them, had the coolest nerve I ever saw.

Close to us in an O. P. partly underground and partly tunneled through a dense thicket, unwinking French eyes kept ceaseless watch upon the German lines, and in a little secret nest of its own a big French gun slept with one eye open, commanding trenches and plain for miles when it chose to open its black lips and thrust forth its dragon tongue. It was not speaking that day; neither were any of the German guns within its reach. Indeed, since the furious combats which wrested Hartmannsweilerkopf from the German hands, the lines have been very nearly stationary. Commanding the plain from the heights they now control, the French could easily blast the Germans out of their trenches and rush them back a few miles. But if they did that, the Germans would naturally retaliate by blasting the two Thanns and Cerny off the map—and the French do not wish to have any greater damage wrought in Alsace than is absolutely imperative; not only because damage is costly to repair, but also because of the moral effect upon the Alsatians. To smash up towns and obliterate farms and property is not the most diplomatic method of winning the affection and regard of even a people who consider themselves the national children of the avenger. The Germans, on their part, do not wish to smash up what they consider German property; consequently the fight in Alsace goes by fits and starts when it goes, and for the most part is a stand-off.

Farther north, where our troops have entered a sector in Lorraine and made it lively, the same thing may hap-

pen that occurred up in Belgium, in a region where the Canadians took vigorous hold. Until they came, the general situation had been fairly quiet. After they had been there a few months, if you said *"Canadian"* to a Belgian of that vicinity, he would swear or spit. If you asked him why, he would wave his hand comprehensively at the desolation the Germans had made in reply to the Canadian offensives. "These damned Canadians! Until they came, we had homes. Look at things now!"

Why must the generous French in all cases insist on Staff Officers and time limits for visitors? At the actual front, of course, that rule is not only quite proper but absolutely essential for anything but the work the daily cable men do. But at a quiet place like Vieux Thann, for instance, why could they not let us sit down for a day or so, to browse and dream, to scrape acquaintance with the people, and to make coherent notes? I spoke of it to our genial conductor. *"'Inter arma silent leges,'"* he quoted, smiling. "It would be all right in some places and with some men; but unfortunately not even all correspondents can be trusted to display discretion—and this is war." I interpreted to Signor S——, and all the rest of the afternoon he kept chuckling to himself in Italian: "It is war! It is war!"

Our stop in Old Thann was merely an aggravation, though we had time before luncheon to see its beautiful church, an ancient Gothic structure, very tall, with a tremendously high-pitched ornamental slate roof, above which

the spire rockets upward, slender and graceful as a budding hollyhock. One of the innumerable Alsatian proverbs clings to this spire—

*Le clocher de Strasbourg est le plus haut,*
*Celui de Fribourg est le plus gros,*
*Celui de Thann est le plus beau!*

*Strasbourg's spire is vast and tall;*
*Friburg's largest much of all;*
*But Thann's, though not so great or high,*
*The loveliest is beneath the sky!*

The interior of the church is very odd and interesting, quite different from the pure Gothic, the lofty-groined nave flanked to north and south with wide side chapels between the buttresses. The windows have vanished under the pressure of war, most of them *frappées* by concussion, some removed, all replaced with plain muslin fastened by wooden slats. The result is that the nave, which must have been very dark before, is now unusually light, and even the side chapels are completely visible. The different tablets posted on the pillars, representing the Stations of the Cross, form an illuminating commentary on the German spirit. Every line of them is in German lettering and German text, instead of the customary Latin. While we were looking around, children who had followed us in, inquired of my American companion, whose gray hair and pleasant smile gave them confidence, whether Signor S——, whose faded uniform they distrusted, might not be some kind of a *boche!*

At luncheon we decided against going into the fire trenches on Hartmannsweilerkopf, though the Captain told us we might; but we could go in only at night, and we should have to stay in the sector we entered until the following night. None of us wished to lose a whole day in such close and uncomfortable quarters, and the alternative suggested, of climbing the much higher Mulkenrain, and looking down upon Hartmann'—so the French abbreviate it much of the time—seemed more promising.

Once more on the Route Joffre, we ran swiftly up through the valley of Thann, past an old Crusaders' castle on a peak above the town, to Bitschweiler, and thence, by a soft, dangerous road where the white signs at the steepest grades read *"18 Pour Cent," "22 Pour Cent,"* and once *"28 Pour Cent,"* to the *rond-point* for automobiles. Thence, with one of the artillery officers from the crest of the mountain as our local mentor, we climbed the road, we climbed steep, zigzag gun-paths, we climbed a mere trail among trees, many a one shot in two without injury to its immediate neighbors. How was it possible for any shell to come sailing through that dense pine wood and hit only one tree?

When we emerged on top of the Mulkenrain, almost 3,700 feet above the sea, we found ourselves shut in completely by the wettest, most blinding fog I ever saw on land. It lay in great banks that rolled and turned on one another like vast woolen blankets, it cut off the treetops below us, it made the steady booming of the artillery around Gerbevillers, or Gerbweiler, sound muffled and hollow. We sat

down on the wet grass and listened to war stories while we waited, on the chance that the fog might lift. The artillery Captain, a young Alsatian with pink cheeks and golden hair and a blue eye grown hard and cold as a bayonet, told us dramatically of the fighting that had wrested the invisible Hartmann' from the *boche*. Verdun itself witnessed no finer, loftier courage, no more desperate conflict. There was something epic in the simplicity and directness of that account of the months of furious combat up and over the mountain top, where France forced back Germany inch by inch over rocks incarnadined with the choicest ichor of her Army, and the forests fell away tree by tree until naught was left on that battered peak but one disabled survivor.

And then the fog began to lift. There it was—the lone pine on the very summit of Hartmannsweilerkopf, almost six hundred feet below us and half a mile across the little valley, tearing the blanket to ribbons! Presently it stood clear, a single beheaded tree, its two shattered arms extended in piteous appeal, on a tiny, absolutely desolated island, with the white surf beating about on every side. That was all. Impenetrability closed over it. But perhaps the fog would lift again. We waited an hour—two hours. The four o'clock sun called, and all of a sudden the fog rose in a solid bank, collapsed upon itself, doubled back, and there was the entire mountain, shaggy as a satyr below, its crown covered with boulders, seamed with ragged furrows, thorny with short, jagged stumps—and that one, terrible

tree, tortured and riven, the ghastly monument to the valient souls who had stood like the trees about them to be mowed down by the iron blasts.

Down the valley, where the fog still clung, an aeroplane went up. We heard the hollow purr of his gun—a Frenchman. A moment later came a slower fusillade—*put!-put!-put!-put!* It was for all the world like a pneumatic riveter on a New York skyscraper on a thick day. And then the sharp bark of a "Seventy-seven." The *boches* were after our French friend. The battery was very close—the shattering *éclat* of the long shell seemed directly overhead. The aeroplane duel kept steadily on; other anti-aircraft guns, rifles and *mitrailleuses* joined the chorus, and we scattered to various vantage points. I stepped up on a low stone wall, and peered steadily into the mists. Suddenly all around I heard somebody slapping bits of board together—*clack!-clack!-clack!*

I looked around—not a sign of anything! The noises increased in vigor and frequency. They became a small storm. I stood quite still, listening and watching. A startled cry from behind made me turn cautiously on my precarious perch. Our artillery Captain was racing toward me over the rock-sprinkled grass, shouting:

"Get down! Get down! Take cover!"

I jumped from the wall and slipped behind a tree just as he came dodging up to me, his face flushed, his eyes severe.

"Why do you expose yourself?" he demanded tartly.

"Don't you know machine-gun fire when you hear it all around you?"

It took me a moment to get my breath. "Well, no," I answered. "I've stood behind it often enough, but I never was in front before. Were they potting at us?"

"At *us!*" he exclaimed. "No! Monsieur, those were spent balls, falling harmlessly from heaven!" He caught himself up sharply, changed tone and manner. "I think we shall do well to keep out of sight, sir. You have seen Hartmann', anyway."

Down the Mulkenrain we plunged and staggered and slid—graceful as marionettes—making harder work of the descent than of the climb, and providing amusement for the artillerists who greeted us cheerily from their *camouflé* barrack, half-dugout, half-rustic-summerhouse. And then the motors, "conserving" the precious essence by running on gravity, skidded down those frightful grades and angles to Bitschweiler and on to Thann, where we had a royal dinner served amid joyous clamor in a little hotel with carefully darkened windows and doors, by an Alsacienne with the figure and face of a Juno, a radiant smile, and the astonishing appellation of Phinélé.

The genuineness of the French Army's democracy appeared when a young *Chasseur* private whom our American companion knew, was invited to dine with us. His fellows drank a roaring toast to "Jean's capable stomach" as he, distinctly abashed by the presence of our Staff Captain, came over and sat down. The evening went off with a

merry swing amid clouds of cigarette smoke and a deal of noise—toasts, singing, rough soldier jokes and banter of the Junoesque Phinélé. If this sounds bacchic, the fault is mine. When it was all over, everybody had tucked away about two glasses apiece of the very mild local wine. Your true Frenchman does not need alcohol to fire his powdery gaiety and sense of humor: he can wax genial over dried frog's-legs in the trenches under fire!

We motored up to Kruth by night, running without headlights, as the road was in view of the German observers most of the distance. "Going it blind" on a fine, untenanted highway is all very well, but there was some psychological discomfort in swooping around those silent turns and darting through the high-walled tunnels of murmurous trees among which a *boche* shell might tear its way at any moment. The discomfort became very real as a sharp challenge suddenly halted the first of our cars so unexpectedly we almost ran into it. A French sentry at its door held his bayonet at the charge.

"What do you mean by running past a sentry?" he demanded.

"Sentry!" repeated our Captain. "Where?"

"A hundred meters back. He challenged, and you ran by him. Now I have you. *Passez-moi le mot!*"

"*Mon Dieu!*" cried the Captain. "I haven't the password! I forgot to get it!"

"You get out and come with me. We'll see about that," retorted the sentry.

Captain A—— came out of that car in more of a hurry than I had ever seen him exhibit before. The sentry kept his eye on him and called to another guard to hold the rest of us while he took his prisoner to the corporal.

"You were lucky the fellow didn't blow your head off," that worthy grumbled. "If it had been near Verdun, or along the Somme—!"

"It was close enough for me," murmured the Captain afterward as he told us of what had happened in the dark little hut where the corporal sat.

We made a great loop all around the recovered region, through picturesque old towns all with the same high color and charm, "over the hills and far away," and came to rest at last back in a Belfort hotel at the very moment the siren on the Fortress began to bellow and the guns on the outskirts began to pop. We rushed out into the main square where we could see the fort, as well as the sky. People gathered in knots in the streets and stared upward.

"Oof! Driven off!" exclaimed our Captain, as a *Chasseur* bugler mounted the steps of the monument to the heroes of '70, and blew the beautiful call announcing that danger was over. We turned back to the hotel and luncheon. Three times we heard the message of peace repeated, in different quarters of the city, before we reached the hotel—and while we were in the midst of our soup the siren began to bellow again.

*"Alerte!"* said the Captain, suspending his spoon for an

instant. Then he went calmly on with his meal, and we could do no less.

Belfort has no fear of the *boche* flying men, even though they come by day and fly low enough to turn their machine-guns down the streets. On Monday of the week we were there they killed sixteen dogs; on Tuesday, eighteen. Wednesday they did better—a baby in its mother's arms and an officer of the garrison. At the same time they bombed a little, blowing a hole in the pavement in front of our hotel, all of whose windows were broken. Yet Belfort, mindful of its heroic standard of 1870, goes calmly on about its business. The big sign on the façade of the hotel —*CAVE! Refuge en cas de Bombardement. 60 Personnes.* (Cellar: Refuge for 60 persons during bombardments)—called no one in when the *alerte* blew. The stranger would not have known anything was amiss save for the groups who gazed skyward.

The mountains of Alsace are not very lofty, not especially impressive peaks as great mountains go, but they are supremely lovely, and when the war is over, the Route Joffre and the fine new Route Nationale, which skips like a chamois from peak to wooded peak, will be the resort of every traveler with a motor. The vistas from these blue hills are blue and green and silver below, azure and silver above: the Vosges themselves, the distant Alps, the headwaters of the Moselle, the exquisite little Lac de Sewen from which it flows, the far-off Rhine and Germany, the dazzling skies. From the little observatory on the top of

the Ballon d'Alsace, the highest of all the peaks, with its brass-topped stone wall marked by direction arrows, we looked away over all these, over the lonely fortress upon the huge Ballon de Servance, and down upon Belfort, shining in cool summer sunshine far below in the plain.

It was a prospect to make one think, that circular view along the roof of the world: France—giving her treasure and blood for Alsace; lovely, virginal Alsace, chained like Andromeda, waiting the deliverance of a new Perseus. The world-public has not yet wakened to the importance of the region; it listens in honest confusion to the lying propaganda Germany is still assiduously spreading to cloud the issue and weaken the Allies' determination that right shall be done. It will be done! France has sworn her oath, the leaders of British thought have pledged themselves, and America has taken her stand beside them officially, despite the ignorance and indifference of most Americans. So, through an immediate future as uncertain as the haze which made the vista quiver that sunny morning from the top of the Ballon, Alsace waits, and hopes, impatient now that her long slavery's end is near, but confident of the *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité* she sees dawning over the blue shoulders of her bounding hills.

## CHAPTER XVI

### A SAVING HUMOR AND A NEW ART

*C'est à rire*—It is to laugh!

But how could any nation so hard pressed by war as France manage a laugh? On the other hand, how could she do anything else? Certainly had she looked only on the darker side, kept her mind fixed upon the horrors she was and is going through, France would quickly have gone as mad as the Bolsheviki, instead of sanely, wisely planning and working always with the one great end in view: the vital after-war reconstitution of people and country.

At first, of course, she did not laugh, in those grim days when the shock of the treacherous assault shook her soul to its very foundations, and the whole world seemed to rock dizzily with the impact. Nobody but the *boche* laughed in those days; and that laughter was not good to hear, with its taint of brimstone and raw blood. Yet the saving reaction, the inevitable, essential rebound was not long in coming, and individually and collectively the French felt the tug of the desire to smile. *Voilà*—they made something to smile at, and the whole world is the richer for that inextinguishable gaiety.

They have that rare quality, the ability to see the funny side of even their greatest privations and sufferings. Their

weird trench newspapers ridicule the man who complains of his pillow—a mud puddle—being soiled because the man who stood on it last spit on it rather too freely, as well as poke fun at exalted generals. Not exactly parlor humor—that pillow joke! But soldiers are children, and anything that makes them laugh because of its human universality is chuckled over and repeated and relished, and passed from lip to lip, until it becomes almost a classic. These trench papers, at first written out by hand, mimeographed when war settled down into long trench sieges, and now often printed on regular presses, have a keen wit and a vivid style no publication of civil life can hope to obtain.

From the beginning, the artists at home have kept pace with their fellows in the lines. One of the men whose drawings gather a crowd around the windows where they are exposed on the Grands Boulevards, went up to the front for a time and came back with a whole portfolio of ideas—slangy, gay, impertinent, but always witty. One of his sketches shows a private staggering back into the fire trench at supper-time with two big kettles of stew for his waiting comrades—and a beautiful black eye. Beneath it runs the fable, here Englished to correspond with the soldier slang:

"Great Scott, old scout—hit?"

"You said it! Caught a flying beet in the lamp!"

Everybody in France knows what exploding shells do in a field of sugar-beets, and they love Poulbot for seeing, not

the shell, not the escape from a mangling death, but that flying beet and the astonished black eye.

Poulbot's humor sometimes takes forms America can not grasp easily, or altogether appreciate, so thoroughly Gallic is it, but his impertinence is quite as American as anything America ever produced in the days when our humor was crisp and sparkling and unspoiled. "Here, you, cut out that shooting," he makes a *poilu* up a tree, spotting for the guns, remark to a group of angry *boches* below shooting at him, "or I'll come down and kick your pants off!" The first time I saw that cartoon in a Paris window an elderly gentleman with the ribbon of the civil branch of the Legion d'Honneur in his buttonhole stopped beside me and labored over it with myopic eyes for at least five minutes. His grave, careworn face lightened; little, pleased wrinkles gathered about his eyes and mouth. He suddenly pounded the sidewalk with his stick. *"Pensez-vous!"* he exclaimed softly. "Imagine! The young scoundrel! I'll bet he captured every mother's son of 'em, too!" and the old gentleman marched off, a little straighter than before, slashing before him with his very unmilitary cane.

Every phase of the war comes under the keen pens of the gifted men with the long hair and the greasy, spotted corduroy trousers and flowing neckties over in the Quarter. Here one asks trenchantly in a little dialogue between a mother and baby as the *boche* troops file past with civilian prisoners: "Máma, are these the men who shot my Papá?" Humor? Yes—the kind of humor that makes France grit

PROPAGANDE ALLEMANDE

— (On ne croirait pas que j'ai tué la mère.)

It doesn't know I just killed its mother

- Sale Belgique !... Ach !... voilà encore qu'il pleut !

Dirty Belgium!—Ach!—there it is raining again!

- C'est pas moi !... c'est lui.

It is not me—It is him

- Camarade !... maman !... camarade !

Comrade!—mama!—comrade!

"Run! Tell mama I'm a prisoner of war—with the milk"

Lucky for me my sleeves are so long they don't know
I've got my hands yet

her teeth, swear by all the curious and inoffensive things that go into French profanity, and turn with a gay smile to the cheery, bearded *Chasseur Alpin,* bent double under his load of eighty pounds—"Heavy? Imagine! Got the kid's picture in there!"

And how the Frenchman has reveled for three years in his gibes at the Teutonic stupidity and heaviness and indecencies! The Kaiser, peering through a field telescope at the heaps of German dead piled against the outworks of Fort de Vaux at Verdun, was handled roughly. "Sire," his Adjutant reported in great agitation, "our dead are mounting steadily before Fort de Vaux!" And the Emperor was made to reply, in his sadic folly: "All the better! They'll get us to the top after all!" Grim, indeed; grimmer, in fact, than even that other, censored, drawing of a milestone in the open, marked indistinctly "Verdun . . . Kilometres," with the whole landscape covered by German bodies, and below it the only words the censor permitted to appear—"The Goal." They got there. France admitted that; admitted all the German War Office claimed of Germany's arrival at Verdun; published it, even, to her own people—showed how successfully they got there!

Berlin and its millinery shops, where hats stamped with black iron crosses could be turned out "eighty thousand a day" to follow the latest mode; the hungry mob outside the empty butcher-shop, with the butcher safe behind his grille telling the people, "No meat to-day, but get the Official *Communiqué*—it's excellent!"; the helmeted soldiers kneel-

ing behind a tombstone before which a widow and orphan pray (*The Listening Post*); and the weather in Belgium, which so annoyed the happy German soldiery with its continually tearful skies, all came in for either fun or fury, but always with a power to touch the French heart in its tenderest spot, and always with the fewest pen strokes, the simplest words, the broadest sympathy.

Even when their hearts were torn asunder by the stories from the front, by the evidence brought back and given them to see, of the frightful atrocities committed upon the helpless and the non-combatant, the French found something to make a joke of. Gallant and joyous race! No strain of war, no unending agony can break or even warp them so long as that precious ability to jest with death and terror lasts. The huge German officer pistoling Edith Cavell when the firing squad had failed to complete its work is made ludicrous as he stands with one hand in his pocket and with a nonchalant smile upon his lips, white gloves on his hands, his boots polished to mirrors, a perfect type of "The Great Germany," a figure as inhuman as the fat *boche* infantryman feeding a baby of the invaded region and grinning: "It doesn't know I just killed its mother!"

"Run!" cries a ragged, grinning brat with a milk-pail, in one of Poulbot's satires, straining away from the *boche* who has seized him, while two smaller children watch in terror. "Run, kids! Tell Máma I'm a prisoner of war —with the milk!" Even the children know enough to

make a jest for Mother's sake of the captivity that means only God knows what. And the two tots shivering on the ridgepole Christmas Eve, hoping to see a Zeppelin even if they don't see Christmas, typify the French ability to make something out of nothing, or a reward out of a pang or a disaster.

Certainly Poulbot knows the heart of childhood, as well as the heart of humanity, or he could never have sketched a little girl, her right arm in a sling, kneeling before a small mound surrounded by stones and headed by a black cross, while behind her two other children look on at the grim little game, and one says: "It's her hand."

The grimmest, as well as the wittiest, of all the war sketches I have seen, is another child picture. Two monstrous German soldiers, like misshapen grotesques under their kits and their bags of loot, goose-step past some burning ruins. In the foreground a typical French gamin grins from ear to ear in malicious bliss as he looks down at the sleeves of the old overcoat which engulfs him completely. "Gee!" would be our way of putting his caustic commentary. "Lucky for me my sleeves are so long they don't know I've got my hands yet!"

In the shop where I purchased most of my sketches, Madame came to me one evening with three drawings I had not seen. "You have been at the front, of course, Monsieur?" she said. I assented. *"Eh bien!* And you live here in Paris?"

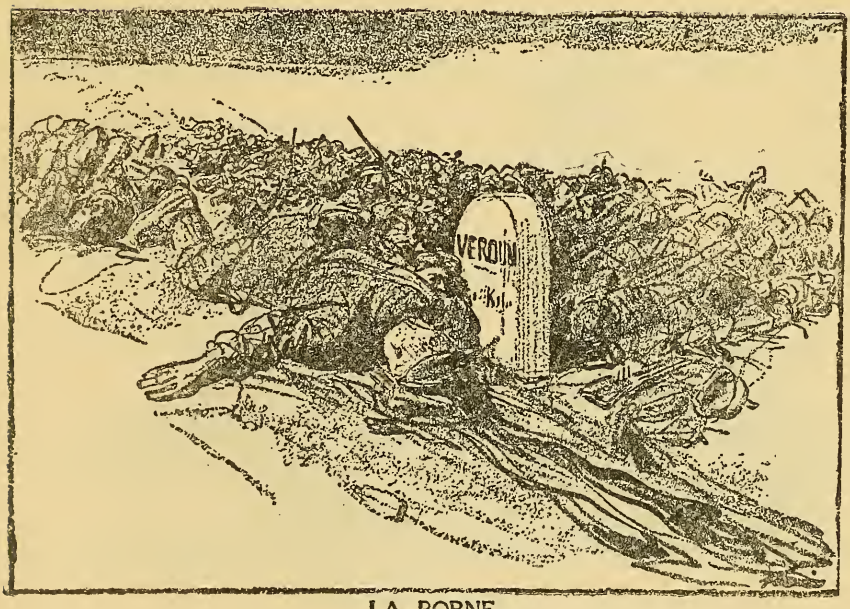
"Between times, Madame. I go to Lens to-morrow."

"Perfectly! Regard these, then," and she handed over the cards.

*"On les aura!"* I read beneath three children climbing on one another's shoulders to reach the jam-shelf. "We'll get them!"—Marshal Joffre's adjuration at the Marne and the Somme reduced to the terms of domesticity. The second was a colloquy between an ancient dame in front of her stationery shop and the barkeeper of the café next door. The aged complainer stands with a franc in her hand, ready to put it into the slot of her gas-meter. "First we have poor gas," she grumbles, "and then we have gas full of water, and pretty soon we'll have asphyxiating gas!" Frightfulness in daily life behind the front, whether it be the lack of gas or of food or of heat, has so inured the people to personal hardship that they turn the edge of the meatless, heatless, wheatless, hot-waterless days with a quip whenever they spare a moment to think of them at all. Madame watched me closely as I smiled over the pictures, her own ruddy features glowing with satisfaction. When I turned to the last card, a charcoal of a little girl leading a plow-horse while mother guided the plow past a low cross surmounted by a soldier's *képi,* she could restrain herself no longer.

*"L'autre tranchée!"* she cried, quoting the printed title. "The other trench! *Chic, bien chic, n'est ce pas?"* She dashed something out of her dark eyes and nodded at me with a new smile, a smile that showed the depths of her soul. "France wars," she said softly. "We war for her."

It's her hand




LA BORNE

The goal

Are those the men who shot my papá?

UN POSTE D'ÉCOUTE

A listening post

That was all. "We war for her," we women, we children of light and gaiety, we who have not forgotten how to smile and be gay despite the lumps of leads within our breasts where our hearts once were. Only by the merest chance did I learn later that her own war-widowed daughter was warring for France behind a plow, whose *reformé* (returned as useless by the Army) horse was guided by her little daughter. Coming back to the shop later on, I asked Madame if she had shown me everything she had.

"Monsieur," she said gravely, "you are an American. But, also, you understand. You have been here with us. You have been at the front. You know what war means. You will not be hurt for your country if—?"

"Madame," I answered, "I am going home to try to make my country feel this war as she has never felt anything before. There are no nations any more among us Allies. I am not American—you are not French. We belong to the same family."

That fat old woman, who before the war might well have been considered not to have one idea in her shiny black-dyed head, bowed from the waist with a royal grace. "Monsieur should be French!" she said; but it was more like an explosion of gratitude than a compliment. Then she handed me a great, stark charcoal, a thing of few strokes and sinister ones—a blazing farm, some huddled refugees, one lone woman silhouetted against a sky blank save for a vanishing *boche aviatik*. Under it the artist, still full of

the fine fury of composition, had scrawled: *"Dire qu'il y a encore des neutres!—They say there are still neutrals!"*

Brave Madame! She knew in her heart that America was not yet awake, and she risked that most dreadful thing —the loss of a customer—to try to stir at least one American to new vision.

The war that has bred a new spirit throughout civilization has been obliged to coin a new language all its own to suit the new conditions it has brought about. Drumfire and barrages, No Man's Land and "going over the top" are only examples of the innumerable now familiar terms which sounded so strange to our unaccustomed ears a brief three years ago. The soldier slang of to-day will be the common speech of to-morrow when the men come back home. But there are certain phases of the martial activity which have not as yet been able to reduce to speech of any sort what the men who cause them know and feel and do, so that the civilian can understand. Of all these, the air service stands first in unintelligibility.

The air is the last of the elements to be conquered by human ingenuity, and that ingenuity has produced so many marvels not in themselves properly of the air, that one stands confused before the complexity of the service, which, without any solid basis to rest upon, can utilize such hitherto unimagined accessories. For not only has flying been reduced in three years from a haphazard sport to a science with definitely established laws as a basis from which the

individual must work out his own refinements, but it has ceased largely to be hazardous and become almost commonplace in the regularity and precision of its achievements. Because of its demands, cameras were produced that would photograph with the speed of a lightning flash, often through mists and haze, objects which to an ordinary camera would not even appear as pinpoints without form or detail. And yet more because of its demands, a new breed of man has suddenly sprung into spiritual being, a creature so far removed from the man of the trenches, from the man in the street at home, that he is a type by himself, indescribable and almost unknowable, save by his comrades of the same service. He can not be adequately translated into speech or analyzed by the psychologist any more than the things he does in the æther five miles above the earth can be described in any terms men now understand. I had despaired of being able to tell anything of this. Then I learned he can be set before us so vividly, so powerfully, that the most utterly earth-bound intelligence can grasp something of his loftiness of soul and serenity of life.

One day in the Foreign Office Press Bureau, I was begging for a chance to go at once to Reims. My friend Monsieur Zhée murmured something about too many shells just then, took out a card, scribbled on it, and handed it to me.—He was always handing me a sop!

"Go up to the Aero Club de France," he suggested soothingly, "and see some remarkable aeroplane pictures."

I walked out of the Foreign Office dejected. Reims seemed a very faint, if lurid, vision far down on the horizon. I was being balked, and it was annoying. I was weary of aeroplanes. I had seen them by the hundred on the different fighting fronts. I had seen them fight and run, fight and fall. I could recognize their elemental differences of build and style from the ground while they were buzzing angrily above me in the air. And now I was invited to go and look at a lot of mechanical daubs of paint on canvas, telling me less than I already knew! But I went to the Aero Club anyway, picking up an American friend who languidly consented to be bored with me, since he also knew aeroplanes.

From the reception room I glimpsed highly colored, impressionistic-looking canvases on the walls of the exhibition-room adjoining, and groaned as I turned toward my companion. He was standing like a man petrified, staring at a picture on the table.

"The Crusades!" he murmured, almost whispering the words. "Look at that twentieth-century Richard the Lionheart!"

It was a bust. Over the head was tightly fastened the aviator's leather helmet, closing in with its wind-proof embrace stern, fine, fearless features illuminated by piercing, all-inclusive eyes, and given repose and dignity by a strong, generous nose and firm lips. It was a predatory face, the visage of a fighter, a study of a warrior soul that

loves the combat for its own sake. And yet, without in any way destroying the grimness and virility of that perfect boyish knighthood of another age revivified, was a tender sweetness that humanized it—those close-set lips could kiss those of a laughing girl, those eagle eyes cease from combing the skies for *boches* and twinkle into the limpid orbs of wife or child.

"A new type in art!" I whispered back, as thrilled as he. "The air crusader!"

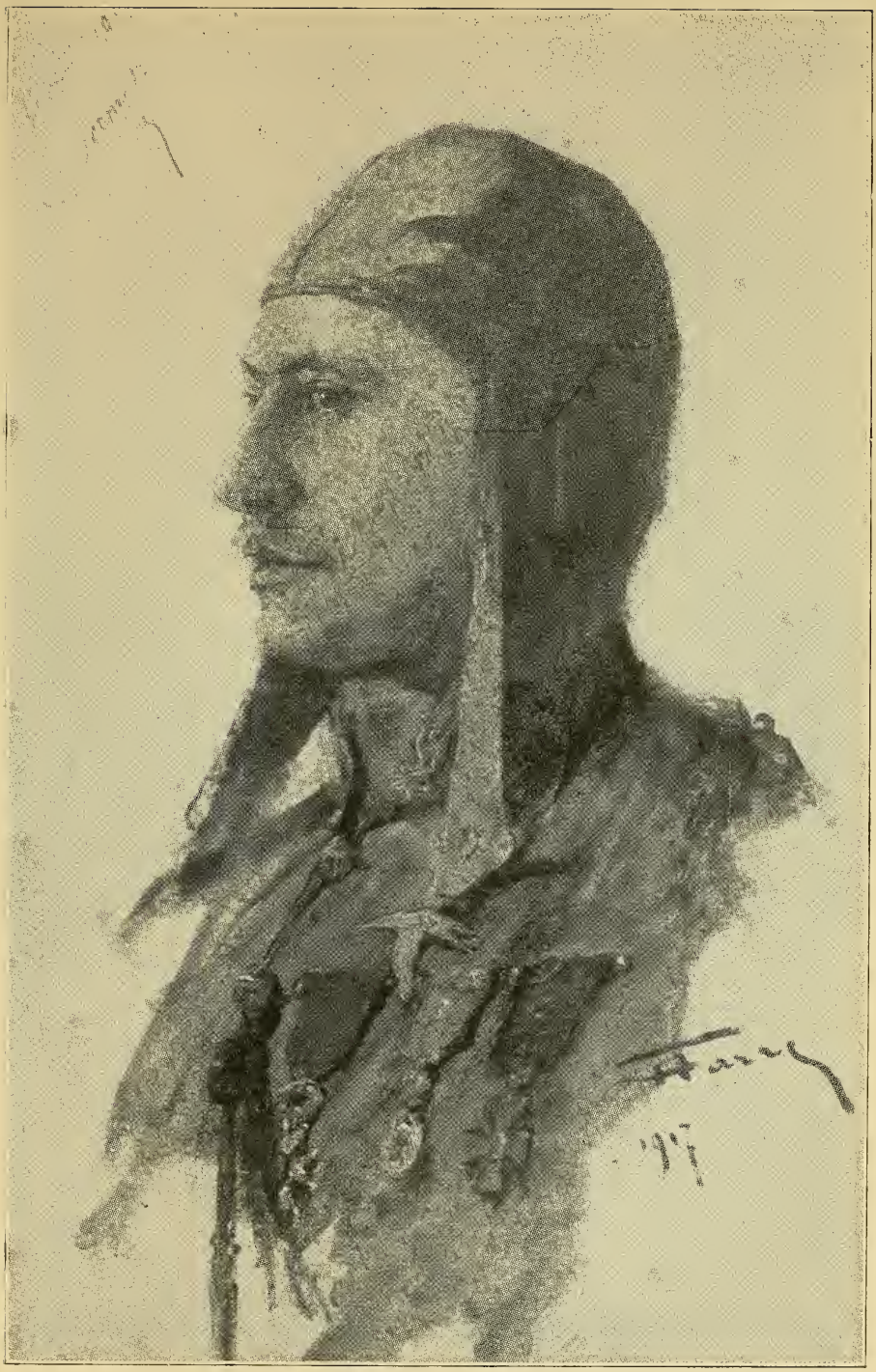
A big, rotund, ruby-faced Frenchman of some fifty-odd, full bearded and keen eyed, garbed in an aviator's uniform and puttees of the horizon blue, noting our absorption, came up. It was Monsieur Farré, who had painted the picture. Crisp, as only a Frenchman can be eloquently crisp, he said: "Gentlemen—dead; upon the field of honor!" After a moment's pause, he added: "Lieutenant Dorme."

I never knew Lieutenant Dorme, never heard of him, save as one of the French "Aces." Who he was and what he had done did not matter, in an artistic sense. What did matter was that he had been the inspiration to Monsieur Farré which resulted so splendidly in the creation of this air crusader. It conjured up a vision of that thirteenth-century past, so vivid the mind was instantly stimulated to some realization of the spirituality and rigorous knightliness of these boys of France—of all the Allied Nations—who consecrate their lives to the uncertain element with all the gallantry and determination, "faithful unto death," that characterized the knights of the Middle Ages who

tilted against the paynim or died on the scaling ladders in the moats of Acre and Jerusalem.

When I looked into the eyes of Monsieur Farré I could understand the portrait even better. They were mystic eyes, curiously in contrast to the heavy, rubicund features, so full of well-fed good nature and not untouched by a trace of the painter's consciousness of his power and resource. They were dreamer's eyes, in whose pale grayish-blue depths lurked a knowledge of the air gained by experience. The eyes of seafaring men sometimes have this eerie consciousness. But they are different: they deal with the tangible always, with clouds whose flight is measured by sea or shore, with the sea whose waves give contrast and motion and shifting colors one can grasp, with winds whose whisper or bluster ruffles or tears very material waters. Here were eyes that somehow spoke of seeing motion of æther; of probing the skyey heights and profundities where no motionless thing exists to give motion the illusion we of the earth need, to realize what motion *is;* of knowing what it means to fall a mile at cannon-ball speed, yet with clear head and nerve unshaken. What wonder such eyes could imagine, and guide the brush to realize on a bit of canvas, a crusader returned to life for a brief space that he might serve mankind by reestablishing the ancient ideal of knighthood in its perfect flower!

Henry Farré was a painter of marines before the world holocaust transformed him into Bombardier-Observer Farré. And now it is the skies, the air that guide his



From a painting by Henry Farré

Lieutenant Dorme. "Dead on the field of honor"

brain and brush in dreams wrought in colors now vague and now lurid, in forms now almost lost in the supporting æther, now sharply defined and coldly wrought: a machine bombarding a hydroaeroplane in distress; that other machine raising a perfect cloudburst of water as it darts furiously down upon a sneaking submarine; the ghostly, ghastly, half-discerned shapes of a flock of machines winging their nervous way through and beyond the deadly barrage fire that fills the opaque sky all about them with horrid little spotty bursts of smoke; that marvelous night reconnaissance beside an astonished moon; and the weird scene above Verdun in a sky full of stars and star-shells, searchlights and shrapnel.

The painter's simple mind groped for words to describe and identify for us what his brushes had plucked from the swirling skies. He struggled to find, to coin that new language which should make intelligible the unspoken thoughts behind the canvases—and failed. Faintly he splashed-in a sort of verbal tone-picture of the effects the upper air has upon the human mind; of the sense that comes to one who looks down upon the muddy ball five miles below—an all but indistinguishable neutral blob or a brilliant series of flattened-out color contrasts—of utter detachment, of freedom, of—. It is no use. Bombardier-Observer Farré could not give it me, and I can not transmit what I lack.

At some not far distant day, when the war is a thing of the past, and we are traveling safely and swiftly through

the unstable medium as easily as birds because of the intrepidity and hard thinking under the sternest pressure of these bird-men of the war, the speech may be found, the terms discovered or invented to tell the story now so vague that even those who sense it do not know exactly what it is—"a psychological condition" beyond doubt, but needing a new psychology for its medium of expression.

Meantime, whether or not the critics agree that these gloomy and glowing, sharply defined and hazily impressionistic paintings are worthy to be ranked as masterpieces, the fact remains that they mark a new phase—bold exponents of the inventive idealism of the twentieth century. And to whomsoever has seen them, no matter what other impression has faded, there will come back again and again—fresh and strong and full of the new spirit the air of the upper skies has bred in men—the feeling that they speak with the conviction of experience the new something we are all to learn some day—and soon.

## CHAPTER XVII

### LEFT-OVERS

As THE end of the book comes in sight, notes until now overlooked keep turning up in unexpected ways, and ideas and memories forgotten in the press of traveling, lecturing and writing keep recurring with most insistent demands for inclusion—so insistent there is nothing for it but to gather them all into one genial spread of left-overs.

Until I applied in Paris for my police papers, I thought I knew who I was. After four days of going up and down and to and fro through Paris and her police stations, I confessed I wasn't even certain I had ever been born! At the Foreign Office a courteous official gave me a note to that majestic functionary, *Monsieur le Prefet de Police,* asking him to be so kind as to expedite the securing of my papers. Right there my troubles began. I presented my note at Headquarters. A glorious person in a dress suit—ten o'clock in the morning, when Headquarters opened! —with a massive, silvered dog-chain around his neck, rejoicing in the ominous sounding title of *Huissier* notwithstanding his innocent occupation as office-boy, bade me be seated and wait upon the pleasure of the august one concealed within.

Half an hour passed. Came the *huissier* again. "Monsieur, you must go to your own *Arrondissement* police station, and apply for your papers there. *Monsieur le Prefet* has been pleased to receive the note. He has filed it."

To the other end of the city I sped in a decrepit taxi. The desk sergeant was very polite. "I am sorry, Monsieur, but we do not issue permits here. You should visit," etc. I spent four dollars that day in taxi fares! By evening I had discovered that the police stations, like all decently regulated Government offices, closed at four, and that before I could secure permission even to make application for a stranger's "Card of Identity" and "Certificate of Matriculation" (permission to reside in Paris), I must have a statement from my hotel that I was actually in residence. When I demanded somewhat sharply of the clerk, who immediately made it out for me, why he had not told me of that requirement before I began my quest, he merely blinked and shrugged.

The days passed, the taxi fares mounted. I took to walking and objurgation. At last I stumbled into the proper groove and the end was in sight. In the same huge building that contained Headquarters, I took my place on the benches with a row of other *misérables,* and grinned at the conversation of my nearest neighbors, two American ladies come over to do relief work, both of them former residents of Paris, and both armed with their expired permits of other days. Before the grin was half-way across my face, a lynx-eyed person in plain clothes tapped my shoulder.

"*Pardon,* Monsieur," he remarked severely. "One does not smile here."

I gave him one glance. "*Pardon,* Monsieur," I replied gravely, "one indeed does not smile in here!"

Fortunately, both the American ladies had handkerchiefs handy. The French and Belgians did not understand, and looked blank. But we three dared not so much as glance at one another after that.

There was more waiting, more red tape to be unknotted before I could get to the far-away front, relieved, however, by one little journey that will always remain an impressive memory—the celebration of the third anniversary of the Battle of the Marne. We were all there: correspondents, visitors, dignitaries, the President and most of his Cabinet, the victor himself and his commanders—Poincaré, Ribot, Steeg; "Pàpa" Joffre, Foch, Petain, Gouraud the "Lion d'Afrique," and all the rest. The train was in two quite distinct parts, though physically one: ahead, the President of France, the Cabinet officers, Field Marshal Joffre and the great Generals; behind, the Foreign Office and Press Bureau officials, correspondents and visitors. Each division had its own diner, and, at the station, its own military buses, like the irreverent "rubberneck wagons" of America.

They took us of the last division in a torrential downpour to the edge of the battle-field and calmly dumped us out into the chilling rain—and we stayed there, soaked and cold, until, half an hour later, the sun broke through the clouds and the dignitaries arrived. Long before, the civil-

ian population of the vicinity for miles around had gathered, careless of exposure: mothers with babies in their arms, drenched to the skin, little girls whose thin legs were plastered by their thinner, dripping calico, boys whose trousers clung black and whose shirts ridged in soaking wrinkles along their muscular young backs, old men whose beards glistened with drops. Soldiers there were by the thousand—veterans of the great fight. They stood in serried ranks that made a broad avenue of entrance to the grass daïs, behind which a neat artificial green screen had been raised to keep off the wind. All about, the broad expanse of sweet, fresh green, that rolled and swelled and fell away to rise again in long, ridgelike knolls rippling into the hazy distance, was poignant with occasional graves. Buried where they fell! What Frenchman can ever forget that bitter field, where the kindly, smiling old gentleman with the seven stars of a Field Marshal on his sleeves gave the order to die rather than yield a single foot?

There he was now, coming smiling along that wide avenue, alone, before him the President and Cabinet, behind him his Generals. Immortal Joffre! He dared to retreat. He dared to keep his lips tight shut and retreat, and retreat, and retreat—while France and all the rest of the world wondered—until that day when he called his commanders together on the steps of the Headquarters Château and said simply to them that along this line they must halt the foe. He did not seem at all the masterful soldier,

not at all the dashing cavalier—just a well-fed, happy, simple country gentleman. But he was—Joffre!

The bands blared as the little procession advanced, bareheaded over that hallowed ground through the dripping grass. The high dignitaries took their places. Prime Minister Ribot, gigantically tall, painfully emaciated, pale faced and snowy haired, mounted the daïs and every hat in the vast assemblage came off as he read, with shaking voice and tremulous hands, the brief speech we had been permitted to study coming out in the train—words without emotion, without emphasis, almost, without a trace of the fireworks a French speech so often contains; but words that spoke the inflexible determination of France to go on to the end, to extermination if need be, for the sake of civilization and honor.

Once more the buses picked us up, ground their way over the slippery, muddy roads to the little Château de Mondemont, torn to pieces by the shelling, first of the French guns that drove out the *boches,* then of the *boche* guns that could not dislodge the victors. Under a great tree near by General Foch stood with map in hand, explaining how he had been able to smash Von Kluck's advance, which covered the plain and the famous marshes that swept away at his feet. The story had everything Premier Ribot's speech had not. It was dramatic and full of vivid color. Here the Death's Head Hussars went down in the marshes—here the whole line crumpled and broke.

As General Foch's eyes cooled and he slowly folded up his map—the one he used in that very Château as his headquarters during the battle—President Poincaré said to him softly: "But, my General, you have forgotten one thing."

The General turned upon him with a start of astonishment.

*"Mon Président!"* he exclaimed. "Forgotten something . . . ?"

President Poincaré smiled, and laid a hand on the horizon blue shoulder.

*"Oui, mon Genéral*—yourself!"

Marshal, Generals, President and Cabinet went down into the field below, where more thousands, this time heavy cavalry, very different in their war-time horizon blue from their former black and scarlet with shining breastplates and helmets, stood stiffly in review. The trumpeters blazed out a terrific fanfare that volleyed through the quiet valley shrill and stirring, and the band burst into the *Sambre et la Meuse,* that old march which would make the mummy of Rameses II beat on its case and struggle to get out and fight! The shivering countryfolk heard it with awe, watched the cavalry re-form and trot away as the last of the officials vanished in the automobiles, stood there petrified with their memories. And my last memory of that celebration is the picture of some cavalrymen posted as sentries during the affair, galloping their horses furiously over hedges and across muddy fields to get back to their commands.

Afterward, as I stood one morning outside the entrance to the great Charing Cross railroad station in London, the picture flashed before me again while I watched ambulances and private motors file slowly out with wounded just arriving in Blighty. Why a hundred or so wounded British Tommies should evoke that vision of galloping French cavalry, I can not imagine, but they did. Perhaps it was the very extremity of the contrast—these emaciated, pale, helpless; those full of the color and vigor of life. Relatives and friends waited beside me on the sidewalk, their arms overflowing with flowers and heather, their eyes with gladsome tears. And how the men reached for those extended branches! They were clutching at England—at home—at life itself! They waved back with pallid smiles of utter content, hugging their guerdons close as the motors rolled out and were swallowed by the unhesitating traffic. The sidewalks, too, pulsed steadily on, save for the few who had reason to be there, and myself. Why? Was England so absorbed in the sordid struggle for existence she had no time for her shattered children? Rather was it not that the street saw, closed its eyes and passed on deliberately, unwilling to drain itself of spirit and nerve which could do no good to the returning, and which it might very well need itself at any moment?

Once in England, the comparative absence of red tape is refreshing. My hotel handed me the usual war-time blank form, notifying me to register as an alien within so many hours at such and such a police station. My passport duly

examined, docketed and stamped, I was asked when I was leaving and where I was going. The replies being satisfactory, the deskman smiled pleasantly and said:

"I know Americans very well, sir, so I'll just put you down as leaving Wednesday. Save you the bother of coming around again. If you don't go, sir, would you mind dropping in again so we can fix up the record?"

"I'll go, if my steamer does!" I responded.

"Yessir. Thank you, sir. Now, is there anything I can do for you while you're 'ere in Lunnon, sir? We're Allies, sir, you know."

I went thoughtfully out of that dim, spotless police station, wondering a little sadly how the minions of the law in a New York police station would treat an Englishman under similar circumstances, and whether an unknown desk sergeant would volunteer help to make New York a little brighter for the visitor. I wondered, too, if everything I had done and said since I left the city of the ragged skyline could stand beside the perfectly unconscious gentility of that policeman. . . .

Where does all the copper and small silver go in France? No one who knows has told, and no one else can tell. But the shortage is so great, the need for small currency so urgent, that practically every large community has issued its own notes for small change, exactly as the United States was once compelled to issue "shin-plasters." Imagine solemn-looking bills for five and ten cents! I was told that in

some rural districts notes for as little as two cents apiece had also appeared. The bothersome feature of these miniature bills to the stranger is that they are of value only in the city or community that issues them. Elsewhere they are mere "scraps of paper."

In September somebody with an eye to saving time and small change, issued the order that the railway ticket agents need not make change except at will. Instead of saving anything, this merely gave peevish agents the chance to vent their spleen on the public. The clamor was instant, noisy and continuous. I heard one such squabble, which left both agent and traveler wrathful. She was old and fat and covered with bundles. A long queue of impatient soldiers, citizens and officers waited behind her for a chance at a ticket in the three minutes remaining before the wickets closed. Madame dropped her big bundles in opening her pocketbook. While the police examined her permit to travel, she counted out her paper and silver and shoved it at the agent. He pushed it back through the grille to her with a snarl.

"Too much! Seven eighty-five, I said. Make change or get out!"

"Keep the change!" retorted Madame with spirit, willing—amazingly enough for a thrifty Frenchwoman—to waste three cents for the sake of catching her train.

The agent boiled over. Thrusting his black whiskers through the bars he shook them at her, shouting: "Get out! Get out! Get out! Next!"

Madame refused to budge. She and the agent struggled for the ticket, each holding fast to an end while the crowd fumed behind her.

"Give me my ticket!" she cried. "You make me to lose my train, camel!"

"Camel yourself!" roared the agent. "Miss it or make change!"

"I can't! You can keep the change!"

"Idiot! Camel! How can I keep your change when I can't! I don't have to!"

In his rage, his fingers loosed a little, and Madame snatched her ticket through the bars in shrill triumph, fell over her bundles, grabbed them up, and waddled away amid a chorus of laughter from the crowd, half of whom missed the train because of the rumpus.

There is plenty of humor in Paris to salt the days of war. The *jours maigres*—meager days—have been the source of endless quips and not a few *sous* to the delightful comic periodicals, most of which have managed to weather the storm of reduced circulation and advertisements, and the high prices of necessaries. First contact with these *-less* days is rather a knockout to pampered Americans. My hotel gravely accommodated me with the usual room and bath. But the hot water would not run. I rang for the waiter. One does ring for strange things and persons over there.

"What's the matter with that hot water?" I demanded.

"Hot water, Monsieur? You wish to shave?"

I needed to shave, but I pointed to the tub full of cold water, indicating that I had not drawn all that for shaving.

"*Ah. . . . . ! Pardon! Pardon, Monsieur!* But there is no hot water! One bathes now only twice a week."

"Twice a week!"

"*Oui,* Monsieur, the Saturday and the Sunday!"

When I asked the clerk why he had given and charged me for useless accommodations, he displayed an almost human intelligence.

"Perfectly, Monsieur," he agreed. "It is of a uselessness most of the times, but is it not that it is of a use that it is there, and ready when the hot water comes-to-arrive and Monsieur wishes his bath without having to wait before the ordinary chamber of the baths?"

One of the papers suggested that since France had days without heat, without sweets, without meat, without hot water, without this and without that, the country go one step farther in its heroism and demand one day each week without—speeches in the Chamber! But nobody, up to the time I left, had dared suggest a day without the "movies"!

The lack of sugar has had one amusing consequence. All along the rue de la Paix, where the highest-priced jewelers in the world have their tempting displays, little "sugar-safes" or fobs in solid gold, in platinum, in combinations of both metals—but never in the vulgar silver!—are on exhibition. Tiny things they are, just big enough to hold one or two dominoes of sugar, but costly enough to make

them as ridiculous as they are eagerly acquired. The rich and thoughtless fill them daily as they start forth on their promenades, so that if the afternoon tea be not sweet enough, the "safe" can be opened and that shocking lack supplied.

One of the most interesting things I saw, and neglected to set down in its proper place, is the big horse-and-mule hospital behind the British front. So much has been heard of the cruel treatment of animals in warfare—much of it entirely true, but also misleading—that this enormous life-saving station was a revelation to me, with its long, low, whitewashed, open-sided stables, its broad meadows of sweet grass where there is ample room to roll and kick up and gallop about. Here are doctors and nurses, operating-rooms and convalescent wards, isolation pens and experimental rooms, exactly as in the hospitals where Tommy himself is cared for. The patient, intelligent brutes—there were twenty-five hundred of them there when I saw the establishment—seem to realize that even when they are being hurt, it is for their good. At least eighty per cent. of the cases had recovered up to that time. They included injuries and ailments of every sort to which horseflesh is heir: wounds, scratches infected by the mud of northern France and Flanders—where the fertilizers of ten centuries have bred poisons no constitution can withstand—bites, kicks, broken legs, everything. Pasted on the pillar of each animal's stall is a card giving its num-

ber, the details of its case and progress and the other usual data—temperature, diet, etc. Here the terrors of battle are forgotten, lean barrels fill out quickly, fire returns to jaded eyes, and dulled coats take on a new luster under the assiduous curryings of men who love and know how to handle animals. One Cockney 'ostler was polishing off a particular pet though it was time for him to be at his tea, instead of chatting with the playful horse, who arched his neck and stretched his bad leg, and whickered appreciatively. If he had been a cat, he would have purred.

"Where was he hurt?" I asked the stableman, as he stood back.

"Wipers, sir," the Cockney answered, and fell to combing again.

*Wipers!* The Belgians call it Ypres (Eepr), which derives from the French term for the elm trees, *ypern,* that used to grow there in numbers. But British Thomas is no etymologist, no purist in pronunciation. *"Wipers?* In course, sir. They spells it wiv a Y, don't they?" And so the city will remain Wipers to the end of time, whatever the dilettanti may call it!

American Sammy has not been "over there" long enough as yet to develop any such mass of loving myth as British Tommy has gathered about himself; but already the racial characteristics have appeared, and Paris knows the likes and dislikes of the new Ally. One afternoon between trips

to the front, I left the Foreign Office, which had been even more courteous—and unresponsive!—than usual, and despairingly accepted the invitation of a billboard announcing a picture play given distinction by some of the foremost actors in France. It was exquisitely done. My neighbor in the dark proved to be a Sammy, a rough diamond from one of our largest cities, full of energy and ideas. As the lights came on he nodded recognition of my American clothes, so easily distinguished in a French crowd.

"Bum show, hey?" he ventured.

I tried to explain to him the difference between good acting and the painful antics of many of our American contortionists of the "movies." He listened, respectful but wholly unconvinced.

"Well, maybe you're right, but I don't wise up to it a-tall. Maybe this is art. I dunno. I do know one thing. I know what I like. This ain't it! Get me? I like 'em t' eat 'em alive! If this is the best Paris can do, I'm goin' t' cable me old frien' Dan Frohman to send us over a few hot ones."

Later on, I passed my erstwhile seatmate emerging from another moving-picture "palace" luridly placarded with the notices of a wild western comedy. With him were half a dozen other husky artillerists. As he caught sight of me, he shouted joyously:

"'Lo, sport! I found one! *Reel* one—seven-reel live wire. Somepn doin' every foot. Hey, boys?"

"Betcher life!" they echoed.

"You better not go see it," was his Parthian shot as they whistled off down the Boulevard. "Might jar yuh!"

Coming back to Paris from one of my trips to the front, I was fortunate enough to board a train of *permissionaires,* or soldiers released from the mud and monotony for a ten-day frolic. First, second and third class carriages proved all alike to them. When we started, a big Canadian of the railway engineer corps, two French medical officers and myself were the only occupants of our compartment. Presently in bounced four husky French heavy artillerymen with their monstrous packs and their more monstrous sabers. All were highly elated at going home. The two officers left at the next station after a reprimand, but the *poilus,* recovering quickly, began a mild jamboree, singing their drinking songs, "firing" their howitzers with snapping fingers and loud *"Boums,"* and winding up with a deafening "barrage" or "drumfire" of clapping hands and stamping feet while they shouted their chorus.

Then one hauled his saber out of its scabbard and began fencing furiously with an imaginary *boche,* considerably to the discomfort of the big Canadian and myself. "Bit thick, this," he murmured to me, as the flashing blade whirled dangerously close to our heads with a wild lurch of the train. "Can you talk to 'em, sir?"

I ventured a gentle suggestion to the excited young ar-

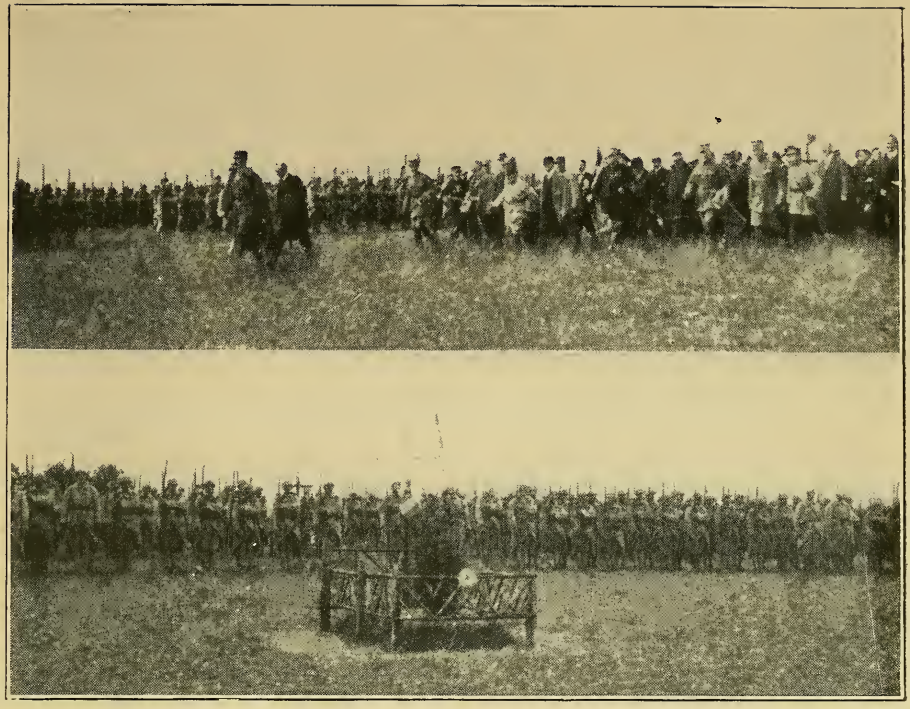
tillerist. For a moment he glared at me; then his emotion reversed at full speed.

"*Américain!*" he cried, thumping the heavy sword back into its scabbard with a clang and a flourish. "Monsieur, I salute you. *Vive l'Amérique!*"

In two minutes we were excellent friends. As the train slowed for a station, the boy struggled into his pack, gruffly ordered his comrades to take up theirs, flung the door open and tumbled them all out—to pile into some other compartment—with a cheery good-by and a word about not annoying an American gentleman with their filthy trench clothes and rough manners! The Canadian looked at me inquiringly.

"Well, I'm damned!" he exclaimed as the explanation finally penetrated. "A Frenchie! Why," he shouted, slapping a two-ton hand on my knee, "the blighter might've been an English gentleman hisself!"

At every station more people, soldiers and civilians alike, crowded in. Many of the citizens had gone part way out to meet the *permissionaires* they expected. Into my compartment came a hungry, pasty-faced young couple who had failed to meet their friends. They were decorated with tawdry finery and cheap jewelry, and smelled of the most vicious perfumery that ever tried to dissipate the odor of stale tobacco from a stale car cushion. But how human they were, "all dolled up" in their pitiful best for the occasion, and grieved as good children at their disappointment! The husband tore apart a dirty paper package containing



Celebration on the third anniversary of the Battle of the Marne. Top—Shows Field Marshal Joffre in black uniform. Bottom—A decorated grave, with veterans of the great battle standing at salute

Photographs by the author

The famous trench theater at Verdun, where the horrors of war were forgotten in remarkable entertainments

In the woods of Verlot, occupied by the Germans and destroyed by Allied artillery

Wanton destruction. Folembray Château—Aisne

a bottle of wine, tinned corned beef with a Chicago name blazoned on it, a hunk of pasty gray war bread, and some ancient cheese. His wife opened the tin, and cut her finger. He sucked the injured member tenderly one moment, and licked the grease from the top of the can next. Then he piled it with pieces of the meat he extracted with soiled fingers, and generously offered me a meal!

When we finally stopped in the smoky, echoing train-shed of the vast Gare du Nord, the platform became a swirl through which one could hardly move. All Paris seemed under the flaring arc-lights to greet the returning brave. Frantic women pulling crying children got in the way of tired-out baggagemen and hurrying soldiers. Bags shot from opened train doors and knocked people over, or fell underfoot and tripped the unwary. Yet everybody was good-natured. Laughter and tears mingled freely as the throng slowly surged its impeded way through the narrow wickets.

Outside the station the crowd was even denser. The expectants were packed solidly in a black mass so jammed that none of them could move. As we emerged the crowd sent up a strange, almost animal cry, half roar, half bitter sigh—

*"They're coming!"*

Magically a lane opened. Every neck was craned to its utmost. Somewhere in the throng a woman's overwrought nerves betrayed her, and she began to cry shrilly. Other women caught the contagion. It might have been a great

funeral, instead of a joyous homecoming. But how eagerly the men were awaited! Many of them had not seen home or families for ten months or a year, and even now the waiting thousands did not know what to expect. *Would he be there—unwounded—his old self . . . ?*

A woman clutched frantically at my sleeve—I was in my trench clothes—spun me completely around and peered into my face.

*"Non! Non! Not my man!"* she cried, and stretched again to see over my shoulders.

I forced my way through as gently as possible and escaped into the street, glad to be clear of that atmosphere of tension. But I carried away with me something of it that still endures, something that points even yet to the hearts, not of France alone, but of all the militant Allied world: the certainty that what the peoples have endured—the waiting, the anxiety, the privation, the heart-hunger—has obliterated from their minds and souls everything but the raw essentials.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE TIME IS OUT OF JOINT—

To-day, when the whole world trembles on the verge of dissolution and chaos, every man with a fountain pen or a typewriter seems to be quoting Hamlet to himself—

> "The time is out of joint: O curséd spite,
> That ever I was born to set it right!"

Theories and panaceas are advanced in every periodical and review, so why should I not join the chorus? The theories advanced here may never amount to anything as practical suggestions, may never have the slightest consideration by the controllers of the world's destiny; but if they serve to make the innocent bystander wake up to his responsibility for the ultimate result, they will not have gone wholly wide of the mark.

I have reached the end of what I have seen, of what I have heard along the battle fronts in France and Belgium, of some of the things worth telling that came under my observation in the cities far behind and close up to the lines. But this has all been merely the recitation—the interpretation, perhaps—of the visible and audible. I have not been able to work into any of the preceding chapters

more than a hint here and there of the real things, of the vital issues this war of the worlds has conjured up out of chaos into the minds of men and women, both at the front and far from it. One can not picture a surgeon weeping over a car full of mangled soldiers, and be much of a psychologist at the same time without spoiling the canvas. Now, however, with the vivid and the highly-colored behind me, I can, I must, go deeper than the superficial. For the men in the trenches, the women in the cities, the very children in the street, are thinking.

What are they thinking about? Why, the war, of course; but not only of the war one sees and hears endlessly. They are thinking back to its causes, forward to the inevitable reconstruction it means throughout the world. Never before in the history of mankind was there such an era of sober individual thought about individual responsibilities as well as individual rights and privileges. Not even the brightest days of the Florentine Renaissance saw men anything like so keenly awake to the realities of life, for then the change was one of a slow, gradual dawning of self-conscious spiritual assertion made possible by study and mutual furtherance of progress.

To-day, greed and hatred have brought the whole world up with a terrific shock, made it realize clearly that we stand at the precipice of the old régime. So the men who have fought and those who have fed and supplied them, the mothers who have sent their sons, and the wives and sisters who have suffered in silence, stand shivering on the edge,

fully conscious of the black ruin below, and groping for a solution of their difficulties. The old things are to go—we know that!—and with them our old habits of mind and thought. War is blowing the cobwebs out of our brains and leaving them with cleaner corners, less obstructed vision. We can never be the same again, any of us. But whether we be intelligent enough to reason matters out for ourselves, or intellectual hermit-crabs hiding in some bigger creature's shell of philosophy, we can see on every side the plain signs of the change, of the revision of our time-honored estimates of both life and men.

The interdependence of peoples has been emphasized and made clear as never before; the soul of each country has been revealed to itself as well as to the rest of the family of nations; in consequence, each man and woman desires a peace which will rid him and her of the burden of war, and of preparation against whatever military monster. So, first of all, the peace treaty will have to be an unequivocal guarantee of permanent common decency. The greatest danger to that permanence will be our traditional generosity to a vanquished foe. In the elation of victory, we may be prone to overlook the suffering, the cost, the disturbance of everything worth while, and recall only the unfortunate chivalric utterance—so typical of that generous attitude—that we are fighting the German Government, not the German people.

Look across the Flanders fields among the poppies, and see the compact little beds of crosses, white among the scar-

let flowers. Look over at the trenches and see the human beings still fighting there with poison gas, with flame-throwers, with maces and knives and bombs. Consider the wounded in the hospitals, the sick and the hungry in the cities behind the lines, the shredded child victims of the air-raiders, the factories kept from their proper constructive work by the destructive demands of war work, and operated by women. Ponder all these; meditate upon a future filled with this same sort of thing, but worse; dream visions of a greater war, so infinitely more terrible than this that we should see England, France, Italy, America, to say nothing of the little peoples, go flaming down to ruin without the slightest possibility of coming back for ages—and no one left on earth but the Hun and his impotent slaves. Is it not more than worth while, then, to see that the only thing which brought about this war, and which could ever bring about such another condition, be so hobbled and restricted that it will eventually die of malnutrition?

In considering peace we must face the fact squarely that the Teutonic Powers have won the war up to the present writing because of their profound study of exactly what they wanted, and their corresponding determination of the ways and means by which what they wanted could be obtained. Their strategy has been a sort of sublimated politics, a highly-refined political and national economy of the most meticulous detail, applied to martial conquest and progress. That it will fail in the long run is due not to

any fundamental defect in its logic, but to the defect in its premises, which argue that one member of a family can ignore the rights of all the rest. But in considering the problems of the afterward, however disastrously the German policy fail, we can not ignore the psychology which made that plan possible, nor overlook the fact that Germany is turning the same acute intelligence upon her after-war problems that she devoted to her preparations for war.

A proof of her awareness and subtlety was going the rounds of the Boulevards in Paris just before I left, a tale utterly beyond human imagination a few years ago. According to this story, a German drummer called upon a Swiss merchant who had been one of his best customers. The Swiss was polite but frigid—"I am sorry. I am not in the market just now." Again and again the German begged for an order—half an order—a quarter of an order of the old-time size. Finally he stared the obdurate merchant coldly in the eye and said: "So! You think because we have carried out our doctrine of military necessity, that we are savages, devils, all that sort of thing!"

"No, no! Not at all!" was the reply, born of the caution of a man who lives next door to Germany.

"Well, you think so, anyway. You have been influenced by English propaganda. All right—no matter. I will prove to you that we are not devils. Have you any one in any of our prison camps in whom you are interested?"

The Swiss hesitated, remembered his wife's nephew. "Yes," he answered, and named man and camp.

"All right," was the amazing reply. "Give me your word that when the boy comes back, you will give me half as big an order as you did last time, and I'll see that he is released."

Not ten days later the boy's joyful exclamations over the telephone from another Swiss city proved the drummer's ability to carry out his promise.

If Germany will go to the length of using prisoners of war as a bribe to win back vanished trade, to what lengths will her subtlety and skill not go in establishing new connections the world over? Until the Allied Powers thoroughly realize and value her psychology, until they wake up to the need of exhaustive preparation for "economic strategy" of their own as an advance measure, the future will remain uncertain. Any waiting, any putting off of the formulation of the bases of peace is folly of the blindest sort. The mere resisting of the German arms has brought no decisive victory. The mere refusal at the treaty table to give Germany what she will demand will get the world nowhere.

But it is quite possible to develop a political and economic strategy before the day of protocols arrives: to be ready with such a plan that when Germany appears at the table, we can say to her: "You are beaten. You have no terms to propose to which we will listen. This is our proposal. Accept it, lay down your arms for good, or be outlawed definitely until you acquire common sense."

Against such an attitude there is no possible rebuttal.

Moreover, such an attitude on the part of the Allies is no wicked, selfish, individual desire to play the hog. It is the controlling of the world by the majority for the good of the majority. No one thinks of disputing the laws that refuse to permit arson or the running at large of mad dogs. The man who proposed to upset such statutes would properly be adjudged of unsound mind. Correspondingly, the individual nation that has tried to upset the machinery which makes life possible for all the rest of mankind, must be restrained. In previous wars the making of peace was comparatively simple because both the times were different and all the men involved were more or less human beings. Today the civilized world must make peace with a people who, no matter how thoroughly they may have been whipped into submission, will still retain a goodly percentage of the educated devil who can not be trusted even when chained. So peace to be peace must take account of a far longer and infinitely more complex future than ever men dreamed of before.

Whatever the new world to be born there on the treaty table is going to be, the Allies must be united in the decision that they shall be its parents and its educators and trainers. No other course is possible. But that course, whatever material form its doctrines take, will not be possible until the public opinion of America is thoroughly awakened and aroused to the need of preparation for exactly that emergency. In other words, America must realize, as most of Europe has already realized, the vital fact

that a definite and cohesive control of all opportunities, wherever and whatever they be, by organized society for its own good, automatically does away with war and outbreaks of violence.

With all this in mind, we must not forget that the peace to come can not be either a just peace or a retributive one: not just, in the sense that a just peace would annihilate the whole martial Germany, root and branch; not retributive, in that it can not—perhaps I should say, will not—enforce conditions to which no people would accede. But it will have to be the sort of peace which takes small account of the selfish desires and personal ambitions of personages and kings and military or political leaders: a peace that will be the surge of humanity, ruthless and implacable toward injustice and inhumanity. It must be the sort of peace—and every awakened soldier of all the millions knows it—that will satisfy and be permanent because it must be based upon right and honor and truth, not upon mere violence and the wilful exercise of power.

Peace—and what then?

Why, then we shall be only verging upon the threshold of a conflict whose limits are limitless, whose field is the world. On every hand the signs are plain of the reactions of the popular imagination to every phase of this post-bellum struggle. But we still need to see the necessity for breadth—*the greatest possible breadth*—in the programs of commercial adjustment and the political and social reorganization and betterment soon to come. Reconstruction,

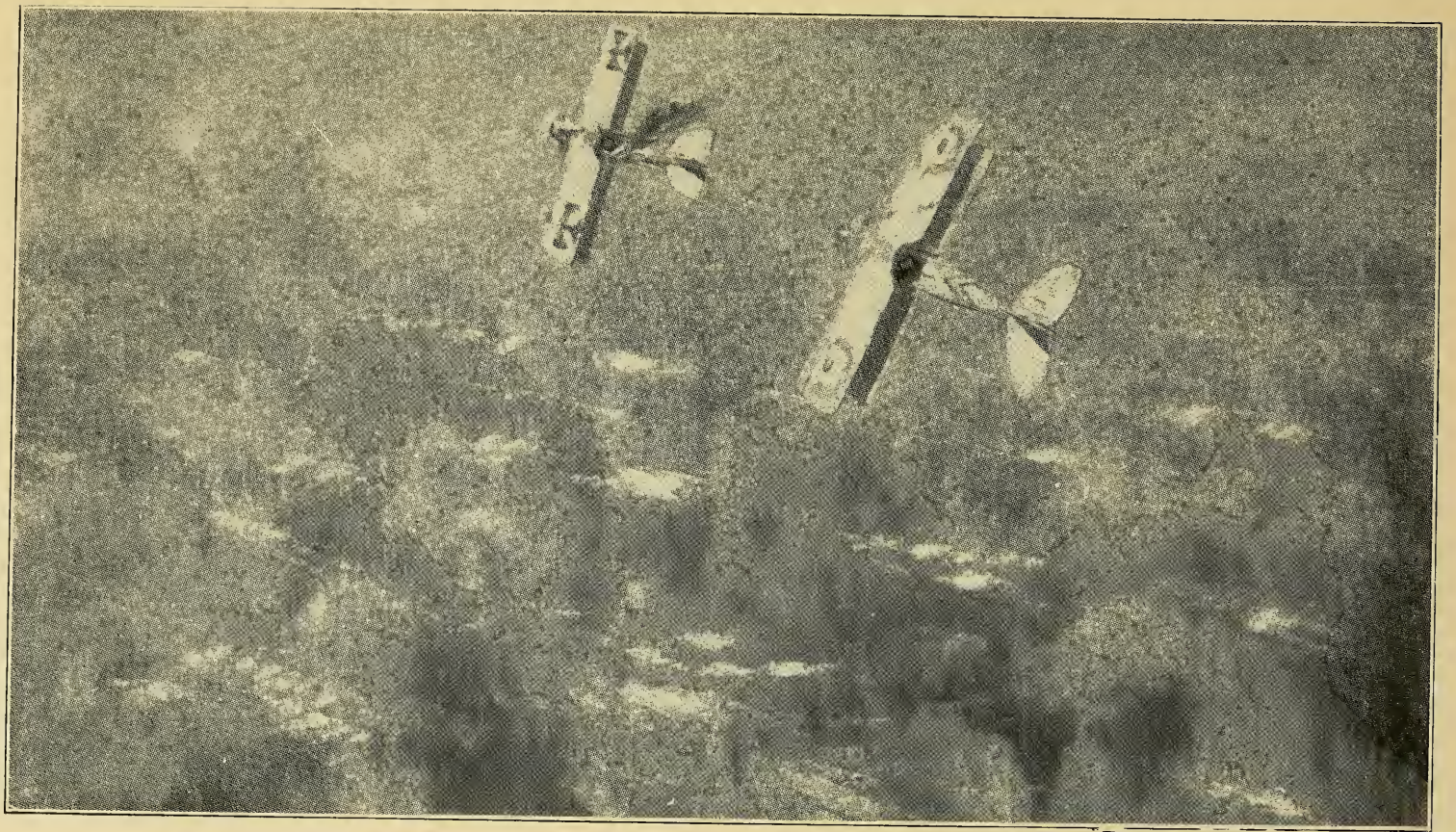
always the aftermath of war, means more to-day than ever, for it indicates the arising of a world-wide situation so full of menace that every man and woman must be not only cool of judgment but open of heart and mind. What happens here in America will be echoed and re-echoed in Europe; what happens there will profoundly influence the United States. We may avoid the "entangling" alliances of history, but we can no more avoid influencing or being influenced than we can hold aloof from the world and expect to go on living.

That this readjustment and amelioration can be effected without friction is to presuppose intellect and intelligence of superhuman quality. The whole social structure is going to be, not torn down, let us hope, but remodeled and rebuilt from cellar to attic. Necessarily whole nations will be incommoded, frightened, perhaps even injured seriously in a material sense, with the consequence of many panicky objections and balkings which will merely delay what can not possibly be deterred or prevented. Things which are dispensable will clutter the path at first with their boulders, but a new public opinion will gradually put them courageously to one side, whatever the effort and cost, and hew straight to the line. The work will be slow and hard, and privilege—whether corporate or proletarian—will put up as stiff a fight as the armed enemy.

It will be useless. If every one could only realize that the war has merely hastened and crystallized all the domestic and international unrest of the past twenty years or

more, how much easier the work would be! We are thinking and talking to-day of things as commonplaces which were undreamed of even five years ago. Russia swept liquor out with a stroke of the pen, and the world stood amazed at such a miracle. To-day we nod undisturbed approval when the United States calmly appropriates railroads, factories, food supplies, tells us what we may eat, what we must do, how much of our surplus funds we must surrender. And this new nationalization, this control of industries and utilities now worked solely for the public weal, will probably not be quickly given over when peace comes. Instead, we shall perhaps see a still further regulation of life and society.

By this I must not in any way be understood as a champion of socialism who looks forward to any permanently radical departure from the inescapable laws of equilibrium and the human factor. It is simply that the logic of circumstances demands experimenting, and we seem likely to go upon the political and economic vivisection table for lack of accurate knowledge of what to do. When the more or less painful operation and convalescence are survived, we shall know, and quite definitely, to what extent the experiment has proved beneficial. Our only fear need be of the enthusiasm the vivisectors may display. They may begin on an inflamed tonsil and end by slitting out the national appendix—an operation not actually called for, but offering irresistible temptation while the knives are yet sharp and the anesthetics effective.



*Sapo* against *Albatross*, sixteen thousand feet above the earth

From a painting by Henry Farré

Yet there is one reassuring feature in the outlook. From our very beginning we have never yet taken a false, backward step. Our progress has always been true progress, always a steady going forward. Whenever crisis has come, the decision of the country has been both wise politically and right morally. Surely, with all that the marvelous nineteenth century has contributed to our intelligence in the twentieth, we can not discount the lessons of history and look forward to turning back!

## CHAPTER XIX

### WILL THE END CROWN THE WORK?

"Once upon a time," as the fairy tales begin, there was a poet. He had soul and imagination enough—as all poets should have—to look through a spring rainstorm and see something more than the drops of water which merely wet the average man. So he sang blithely—

> "It isn't raining rain to me,
> It's raining violets!"

Men have dreamed since the days of Adam's apple, and though it is not given to all of us to see the violets in the downpour, as the poet saw them, we are dreaming now, the world over, of something apparently as impossible three or four years ago as a rain of violets. The tighter we cling to our dream of a millennium coming out of holocaust, and the more intangible the vision seems, or the flimsier the stuff of which it is made, the stronger and more tangible it becomes; the dream of fantasy becoming the waking dream, the day-dream, and gradually the reality whose accomplishment is fully within our human grasp.

A century ago the French masses dreamed in terms of Liberty, Fraternity, Equality, and though the dreams these words inspired have never yet been fully realized, their es-

sence has profoundly modified the constitution of modern society. And yet, when one looks back at the horrors of that period—the world, apparently, never takes a forward stride except through blood—it must seem to every thoughtful student that notwithstanding the aims of the revolutionists were spiritual, the results they obtained were largely material. Though the people of the world quickly learned they possessed certain inalienable rights aside from those ungraciously conceded by their rulers, they failed through their own ineptitude to exercise these newly-won powers and forces to the full.

To-day we are faced with certain analogies. The old régime of social injustice with its economic unrest has festered itself to a head. After the war is over, these old things must go; will go, with more or less violence, as we develop wisdom and foresight. And this time we can not suffer ineptitude to hamper the results. The one vital question we must answer for the sake of posterity is not as to material changes—big and important as these have become, even to the threatening of national well-being—but how far the new spirit to be evoked after the war will be genuinely spiritual and correspondingly efficient for future peace.

On a purely material basis a very satisfactory arrangement could be made even now, while the blood still trickles from Germany's vicious hands—satisfactory, that is, for the time being to a world sick at heart and weary beyond expression of fighting. Twenty years or so hence would

see all civilization strangled by those same vicious hands. What men hope for and dream of to-day is no such chimerical peace as that, no such gross solution of a problem insoluble by the familiar formulæ of secret diplomacy and spheres of influence, etc. We must have something more, something better, something higher—a peace founded upon the more vital things and recognizing, not States or Kingdoms or debatable figures of armament and commercial resources, but metaphysical resources measured in terms of soul. The war has shown baldly, horridly, the failure of the physical to dominate the spiritual.

The German guns that blasted the forts of Liége and Namur out of existence and slaughtered their garrisons or turned them into gibbering idiots, could not extinguish the spirit of heroic Belgium. The long-continued onslaughts about Verdun, where six hundred thousand German soldiers reached the goal and found it a gravestone, never for a moment threw the magnificent spirit of France into either panic or retreat. The sinking of the *Lusitania* and the *Sussex* merely recruited the British Navy, and fired its men anew with the spirit that never dies. So arms are a failure against the intangible soul which men know better to-day than they ever did before—and without the aid of dogma or canonical precept.

And the civil population has rediscovered its soul; is digging it out of its encrusting selfishness and ignorance. There is ample practical demonstration of this on every hand. Never in history have the things been done for sol-

diers and sailors that are being done to-day. Who ever heard before of "Smileage Books," or libraries, or Y. M. C. A. huts on the present scale, or the thousand other things the youth of to-day in the new American Army have provided for them at practically no cost to themselves? Who ever heard of such moral and spiritual safeguards as surround these boys of to-day? In 1898 the men took care of themselves or they were not cared for. Their amusements and leaves were not censored. A man in uniform could drink so long as he could pay. Nobody dreamed of obliterating vicious influences within five miles of the camps. If somebody had suggested a Y. M. C. A. hut as a necessity, there would have been a howl of protest from the men against what they would have considered an endeavor to ram religion down their throats, willy-nilly. Moreover, the Spanish War soldier would have regarded such things as attempts to "baby" him, to make him a mollycoddle, and he would have resented them with a fiery consciousness of his own virility and pride.

The drafted American of 1917 has no such false sentiment. The drift of our American civilization has been, however little we recognized it, steadily in the right direction. The consequence is inevitable. The soldier of the present is no less splendidly virile and self-reliant, no less imbued with courage and intelligence, than his brother of twenty years ago. But he will emerge from the struggle, not merely physically more a man than when he entered, but with a finer and stronger spiritual nature because of

these very influences which, at first, did come as a shock to many of us who had not realized fully the growth and development of the national spirit. In 1898 the man who went in a day laborer came out a day laborer. In 1918, the man who goes in a ditch-digger may come out a first-class artisan or engineer or even a theologian full of poetry! Many of the Allied soldiers have already come out of the contest with amazingly changed vocations as well as new souls, shining and clean, from which the dross of their old ones has been thoroughly purged.

Some of us have seen for ourselves, all of us have been told, that the men in the lines are thinking constantly about the essentials of life. But what are these essentials? How may we distinguish them so clearly from the non-essentials that we need never confuse the two? Is there any necromancer's formula by which the slowest-witted dolt can be made to comprehend and act upon them? There is! and every man has that necromancy within himself. Essentials —what are they but home, country, fraternity, God? What man is there among the soldiers who is not willing to make the ultimate sacrifice to save his family from the hideous fate that overtook the luckless families of Belgium and Serbia, Poland and northern France? What man is there among them who does not understand that his country and what it stands for means more to him than life itself? What man is there among them not alive to the interdependence of nations, to the vital necessity that each understand and help the other? What man is there among

them who has stood under the living hell made by the guns, or bowed his head over some fiendish atrocity, without reaching out for God?

The vast starry spaces of the night, the endless hours under freezing rain in an exposed L. P. (Listening Post) out beyond the wire, the nerve-stretching days of waiting in support trenches, and the crouching agonies of trying to make a tin hat cover one's whole enormous body when the trench is going up in volcanic outbursts, have completely reconstructed the men's minds and ideas. The class distinctions that applied in those peaceful days when the muleteer would not have hobnobbed with the gentleman have vanished automatically, and between men the only class distinction remaining is one of spirit, the only consideration one of devotion to duty and personal courage. Under such conditions the individual,

"Cook's son, duke's son, son of a belted earl"

sees his fellow soldier not as Private This or Captain That, not as an ex-farrier or clerk or leisurely "high-roller" with a fraternity pin and an A. B., but as a human being with the same very human emotions and capacities as his own. And all these men have realized through the cannon's mouth what no preaching or teaching could have made them see—that this war is more of a moral upheaval than anything else. They have reacted to it accordingly. The men in the Allied trenches have no illusions as to a "sordid war of commerce" or capitalism. They have come to under-

stand the difference between themselves and their enemies: the abysmal gulf between the State they represent and the State represented by their foes; on the one hand, protagonists of a civilization which teaches that the individual is above the State, which exists for him; on the other, the driven cattle who know they exist only for the glorification and use of their State and Sovereign.

The moment when the onrush of genuine democracy can no longer be stayed, is coming. And it will be not merely a talkative and vapid democracy for show purposes, but the deep-seated, God-given democracy whose terms were outlined on a green hill in Palestine nineteen hundred and some odd years ago in the Sermon on the Mount. Until this war began such a dream was flimsy and vaporous. No one could see how such an idealized condition was to be brought about, if ever. The air was surcharged continually with thunder and saber rattlings here and there, while the prophets and the Church were "clouds without water." The spiritual atmosphere was full of haze, an unkind haze that veiled the abyss right ahead.

The conflict has cleared all that away. The Church, which was being slowly strangled and desiccated, has been quickened and inspired. Religion is no longer a matter of the acceptance of man-made creeds, of lip-service without comprehension, of the strait ecclesiasticism the past has proved not to have the marrow men yearned for whenever they listened at all to its message. Religion now means a

simple faith and courageous service that links mankind with its God through the understanding of life and its promises, through a sense of individual responsibility. Can we doubt the result? There can be but one if the revived and inspired Church takes wise, firm, clear-sighted advantage of the receptive attitude of men to-day. It can not fail to lead them—perhaps by millions—out into the light, and thus make "democracy safe for the world." And when both the world is "safe for democracy" and "democracy safe for the world," we shall have a world freed forever from the terrible menace of secret diplomacy, of decisions of war or peace in the hands of the little groups who neither serve nor suffer, of the unnumbered things that for ages have made for misery and poverty and helplessness, and, worst of all, for perpetual fear.

Think of what that sort of a world means—*without fear!* A world in which amicable discussion and calm, unbiased law control the action of its offspring; a world in which no one may offend the least of his companions in the concert of nations because of the stalwarts pledged against such a thing; a world without a single national criminal, because international crime will be impossible in its enlightened state! Utopia? The Millennium? Not altogether! But the steady onward sweep of a civilization which will gradually purify itself, and so become increasingly beneficent, can no more be halted now than we can stay the run of the tides. For this is a tide in itself, "a tide in the affairs of men,

which, taken at the flood," will lead to as thorough a sweetening of national life as battle has led to the sweetening of the souls of the individual soldiers.

We shall find back of every change which becomes permanent that spiritual force without which no nation can ever permanently succeed. We shall be unable to close our eyes to the fact that whatever superstructure of law and convention be reared, it will stand upon those eternal principles enunciated by Washington and Lincoln, who saw democracy not as an inert thing, but as a living, growing, increasingly beautiful principle and ideal, inextinguishable and inexpungable. To so lofty a conception nothing is impossible, whether it be international courts, international police, international reciprocity and control of the vital resources of the world—in a word, international fraternity and intimacy.

And for us of America, who are a democracy already; for us who must terminate the war, give the death-blow to militarism and autocracy; for us who already enjoy—without much sober thanksgiving, unfortunately—many privileges to which Europe is as yet a stranger—what is there for us in victory, beyond our physical safety in the years to come?

There are two things; aye, three. There is the establishing upon so firm a basis that they can never be controverted the safety and beneficence of our institutions and form of government. By our success, won through young men who are both the product and the life of these institutions, we shall prove that the State instituted for work and for

peace; for the sanctity of the home and the right of the individual to live his own life without interference, either with his fellows or by them; for the purpose of protecting and encouraging and uplifting its individual citizens, is the only form of government that can endure. There is, in the second place, the joy that comes to every honest soul from victory won on behalf of right, with its corresponding discipline to his own inmost man, making him abler and keener on behalf of the principles for which he has already fought, less tolerant of anything subversive of them. And last of all there is the stimulus of the new régime and opportunity, to urge every man on to a searching of himself and a proving of his abilities to keep pace with the fledgling soul of his Country.

We are being reborn in this struggle. The American Renaissance dates from 1917. Its power in the world of thought, of spiritual achievement, will date from the signing of peace. And then we shall see that the joy of liberation from the menace of all time will make for a reaction so tremendous, so far-reaching, so incalculable at present, that what it will produce, to what heights it will attain through the succeeding years, what inspiring creations of both mind and soul it will bring forth, can not be imaged by any living man. All this and infinitely more we shall see, but—

*We must beat Germany first!*

THE END

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